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## **Ancient Egyptian Autobiographies Chiefly of the Middle Kingdom: A Study and an Anthology**

Lichtheim, Miriam

**Abstract:** By a selection of sixty ancient Egyptian autobiographical inscriptions, presented in new translations, the author examines the growth of the autobiographical genre during the Old and Middle Kingdoms, from ca. 2500 to ca. 1800 B.C. The Old Kingdom created the basic form: the autobiography as an integral part of the inscriptional and pictorial program of tombs - the planned and often sumptuous tombs of the well-to-do, who filled the major positions in the royal administration. After the decline of the Old Kingdom, the rising middle class diversified the genre, and loci other than tombs, notably free-standing stelae and rock faces of quarries, also became carriers of autobiographical self-presentations. The cult of Osiris added yet another dimension: autobiographical stelae erected near the Osiris temple at Abydos and specifically designed to place their owners in the care of the god-of-the-dead. The texts of these stelae often describe their position as being "at the terrace of the great god", a description which has caused much scholarly rumination. Just what was the terrace of the great god? This study demonstrates that the texts themselves furnish the conclusive answer. Finally, the reader meets a magnate of Middle Egypt in his splendid tomb, whose carefully stylized autobiography is a classic of Middle Kingdom oratory.

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AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

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MIRIAM LICHTHEIM

ANCIENT EGYPTIAN  
AUTOBIOGRAPHIES  
CHIEFLY OF THE  
MIDDLE KINGDOM

A STUDY AND AN ANTHOLOGY

UNIVERSITÄTSVERLAG FREIBURG SCHWEIZ  
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**To the Colleagues at the University of Basel**

**ERIK HORNUNG**

**and**

**ELISABETH STAEHELIN**



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## PREFACE : ANCIENT AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Among the literary genres that evolved in ancient Egypt, the genre "autobiographical inscription" held pride of place. Beginning early in the Old Kingdom (ca. 2500 B.C.) the "autobiography" flourished uninterruptedly for more than two millennia, ending only when Egypt became a Christian country. Elsewhere in the ancient Near East, in the Syro-Mesopotamian realm and, later, throughout the Persian empire, autobiographical inscriptions also became an established genre; but they differed from the Egyptian kind in being the recorded pronouncements of kings and lesser rulers, whereas in Egypt the autobiography was specifically a non-royal product. The Egyptian autobiography arose in the context of the private tomb. Its owner, a "private" person, was in Old Kingdom times always an official in the king's administration, one who had obtained sufficient means to erect a tomb in which to record, in effigy and in writing, his individual person. The resulting personal memoirs on stone continued to evolve throughout Egyptian history.

I shall not attempt to sketch the quite different autobiographies of western Asiatic rulers. It would require a symposium of specialists to characterize and compare the various types of autobiography in the ancient Near East. The major work on the history of ancient and medieval autobiography — Georg Misch, *Geschichte der Autobiographie* — has an introductory chapter on ancient Near Eastern autobiography, which is entirely inadequate, inevitably so, since it was written too soon and without firsthand knowledge of ancient Near Eastern literatures. Misch was interested in all kinds of autobiographical impulses; he thus included fictional tales narrated in the first person and, roaming among Egyptian and western Asiatic sources, he composed a hotchpotch account in which nothing is rightly established.

As for autobiography in classical Greece, A. Momigliano, in his *The Development of Greek Biography* (1971), made the point that in Greece autobiography was an offshoot, or sub-species, of biography. Biography seems to have come first and was fuelled by the Greeks' curiosity about the lives of famous men. Now this situation is entirely different from that of

ancient Egypt. In Egypt the genre "biography" did not develop at all. Here then is proof that biography and autobiography are not necessarily interrelated. The point is worth stressing, the more so since egyptologists often appear to be apologetic about calling Egyptian autobiographies by that name and instead speak of "biographical inscriptions", a term which is in fact a misnomer. Even the *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* entered its survey-article on Egyptian Autobiography under the title "Biographie".

Academic studies of the genre Autobiography are now very much in fashion. To quote John Sturrock in the *Times Literary Supplement* of October 3, 1980 : "Autobiography is losing its innocence and being ravished by the professors". I now find myself wondering, if the professors of Western literatures and history who write about autobiography would not gain in precision, and enrich their palettes, if they did not start from the assumption that autobiography is *a modern Western literary form* (so reported as one of G. Gusdorf's points in the TLS article cited above), and if they would not assume that one need not travel farther back in time than St. Augustin's Confessions — a mountain of an autobiography, to be sure, and one which appears to be blocking the view into the two millennia that preceded it.

If autobiography is the narration of bits of one's life from a position of self-awareness and reflection, then ancient Egyptian autobiographical inscriptions were true autobiographies. Naturally, their self-awareness was more elementary and naive than the modern varieties. It is all the more interesting to observe its unfolding and growth. Egyptian autobiography remained within the funerary context and thus always partook of the epitaph. But if the funerary context restricted its scope, it also gave it a special intensity; for the autobiography addressed itself alike to gods and men, and sought their approval, protection, and remembrance. Words were potent, hence had to be weighed; formulations that pleased became valued clichés; and to sum up one's life and person meant stressing achievements and virtues. Even so, the wider scope of autobiography in the New Kingdom had room for the confession of sin and guilt, along with divine forgiveness. Through it all ran the pride of being a particular person, an "I", and the fervent hope that the person was indestructible. Throughout its lifetime that "I" had experienced, and helped to advance, a code of moral behavior. And the learned scribes with whose help the autobiography was composed kept enlarging, renewing, and refining the vocabulary of the moral self-portrait. Scholars who call this "boasting" miss the point. And what modern autobiography dwells on crimes and failures except to defend and explain

them ? Listen to an outstanding practitioner of the art :

*"Je n'entreprendrai pas la postérité du détail de mes faiblesses; je ne dirai de moi que ce qui est convenable à ma dignité d'homme et, j'ose le dire, à l'élevation de mon cœur. Il ne faut pas présenter au monde que ce qui est beau; ce n'est pas mentir à Dieu que de ne découvrir de sa vie que ce qui peut porter nos pareils à des sentiments nobles et généreux."* (Chateaubriand)

#### Acknowledgments

The Chateaubriand passage was cited from Jean d'Ormesson, *Mon dernier rêve sera pour vous; une biographie sentimentale de Chateaubriand*. Livre de poche 1982, p. 136.

To Prof. Pascal Vernus go my thanks for having procured for me the photograph of stela CG 20543, and I thank Miss Janine Bourriau for the photograph of the Fitzwilliam Museum stela E 9.1922. Special thanks go to Mr. Stefan Wimmer of Munich, Hebrew University student of Egyptology, who in February 1987 took, at my request, a thoughtful photographing walk across the sands of Abydos, from the temple of Seti I to the area of the Middle Kingdom Osiris temple and on into the North Cemetery and the Wadi. The selection of his photographs here published is meant to drive home what many readers may not have envisaged : the wholesale destruction and desolation of the site.

Since taking up residence in Jerusalem in 1982 I have been summering in the pleasant town of Basel, reading and researching in the comfortable surroundings of the "Ägyptologisches Seminar der Universität", so hospitably administered by Prof. Dr. Erik Hornung and Dr. Elisabeth Staehelin, wherefore this book is dedicated to these ever helpful colleagues and friends.

Lastly, thanks are due to Prof. Dr. Othmar Keel for the hospitality of his OBO series, and to Mrs. Bernadette Schacher for the skilful typing of the camera-ready copy.

Jerusalem, December 1987

Miriam Lichtheim





## I. AUTOBIOGRAPHY IN THE OLD KINGDOM : THE BASIC FORMS

Throughout its history, ancient Egyptian society distinguished two realms : the realm of the king and the realm of the non-royal, or "private" person. Though wholly interwoven, the two realms remained distinct in all manifestations of social and cultural life, so that all works of art reflected the one or the other realm.

The autobiography was a product of the private realm. Royal inscriptions, though often containing first-person royal speeches, did not assume the form of autobiography. For the king represented the nation as a whole, and in a manner so sacral, stylized, and surrounded by ceremonial as to preclude autobiographical self-presentation. This is not to say that a king's individual personality did not affect his administration; it clearly did. Nor have I forgotten the two texts of "royal instructions" (Instruction to Merikare, Instruction of Amenemhet) which contain autobiographical elements. But they were tracts of political propaganda composed by court writers in the form of royal testaments — a distinct genre which in Egypt did not have a sequel but reappeared in hellenistic and medieval times as *speculum regum*. One may view them as partial exceptions to the general rule here formulated : Egyptian kings did not have autobiographies; private persons did.

The Egyptian autobiography evolved in the inscriptional program of the private tomb. It was born in the desert cemeteries near the capital of Memphis, where rows of private tombs, erected by royal permission, surrounded the royal pyramids. From rudimentary beginnings in the Fourth Dynasty there evolved during the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties a distinct genre of self-presentation in which the tomb owner, by narration and declaration, recorded the essential aspects of his life and person which he wished to perpetuate. The self-presentation was built around two themes : his career with its high points, and his moral personality. Before the rise of this verbal self-presentation, the tomb had already contained the image of its owner carved in relief, and a prayer for offerings and a good burial. These were now joined to the autobiographical statements and rounded off by a "warning to visitors" not to desecrate the tomb.

During the Sixth Dynasty, the prayer for offerings ("offering formula"), the self-presentation, and the "warning to visitors" were expanded and closely interconnected, until they formed an integrated presentation of a person, his

career, and his needs in the hereafter. The "offering formula" kept growing, encompassing ever more wishes for an abundant afterlife; and as an offshoot it produced the "appeal to the living", an address by the tomb owner to the living generations who would "pass by his tomb", asking them to perform an offering for him, or, if they had nothing, to recite the offering prayer.

Though the two can be combined, the "appeal to the living" must not be confused with the "warning to visitors". The latter was a prohibition accompanied by fierce threats of punishment, while the former was a request for gifts, often enhanced by a promise of benefactions which the deceased, who is now a potent spirit in the necropolis, will bestow on those who offer to him.

The two main themes of the autobiography — a man's career and his moral personality — stemmed directly from the tomb owner's position in life. Only members of the royal administration could afford to build tombs, and their owners' standing with the king was the principal factor of their careers and their lives. If an official's life spanned the reigns of several kings, his autobiographical narration often showed a chronological scheme by which his progression from youth to old age, and from small beginnings to major rank, was correlated with the sequence of reigns. In any event, the effective and devoted performance of royal commissions, and the rewards obtained by the king's "favor" were the major topics of autobiographical narration.

The presentation of the moral personality, as befitted its nature, was declaratory rather than narrative. Moreover, newly coined phrases, narrative or declaratory, soon became stereotyped by repeated use :

I have come from my town,  
I have descended from my nome,  
having done justice (*maat*) for its lord,  
having contented him with what he loves :  
I spoke truly (*maa*), I did justice (*maat*),  
I spoke the good, I repeated the good,  
I held on to rightness so as to stand well with people;  
I judged two parties so as to content them,  
I rescued the weak from one stronger than he as much as I could;  
I gave bread to the hungry, clothes <to the naked>,  
I ferried the boatless;  
I respected my father, I pleased my mother,  
I brought up their children.

(Urk. I, 198f.)

When such assertions had become formulaic and were repeated with variations in tomb after tomb, the modern reader is likely to doubt their veracity. But such doubt is beside the point. What matters is that the inherent moral values had been recognized and formulated, and were respected not only by the officials who inscribed them in their tombs but by society at large. For these values were not remote ideals preached by saints, only to be

disregarded in the real world. They were practical, every-day values, arrived at by people who, living together, had understood the mutuality and interdependence of human relations.

There was evidently also a cosmic dimension to this sense of interdependence, a feeling that man lived in an ordered universe controlled by divine powers. A name had been given to this "order" — *maat* — but as yet little was said about it, beyond stating that "doing *maat*" pleased the god.

I stress the pragmatic and common sense nature of ancient Egyptian morality, because in German egyptological parlance the moral self-presentation of the tomb owner is called "Idealbiographie", a term which seems to me misleading, for it conjures up the dichotomy of "ideal" versus "real". There is, fortunately, no equivalent English term, hence I call the thing in question "the moral self-presentation", or "the moral profile", or "the self-laudation". Self-laudation it certainly was, but observe that the values professed here, far from being remote ideals, were precepts that any well-intentioned person could fulfill.

The five tomb inscriptions that follow here, though a small sample, will suffice to illustrate the growth of the autobiography during the Old Kingdom.

(No. 1) The texts of **Hetep-her-akhet**, from his Fifth Dynasty Saqqara tomb, show the rudimentary autobiography and its place in the inscriptional program of the tomb. The visitor is faced by two inscriptions carved in vertical columns on the façade, to the right and left of the entrance, each accompanied by the standing relief figure of the tomb owner. The architrave above the entrance is inscribed in horizontal lines. The two vertical and symmetrical texts are the bipartite autobiography, and the horizontal architrave inscription is a version of the offering formula.

The inscription on the left side declares that the tomb was its owner's rightful possession, that the workmen who built it had been paid liberally, and that its owner was an honorable and honored royal functionary. His titles indicate that his tasks were judicial ones.

The inscription on the right elaborates. The tomb was built in a clean place where no other burial had been. Visitors who desecrate it would incur divine judgment. The tomb was built by royal permission, and its sarcophagus was a gift of the king.

This bare-bones self-presentation is surmounted by the offering formula on the architrave. In its commanding position, the offering formula is the effective ritual complement of the self-presentation.

In addition to the façade, the other focal point of tomb inscriptions was the false door in the rear of the tomb chapel. The false door of Hetep-her-akhet (not translated here) is inscribed with : the full list of his titles; the offering formula in two parallel versions; the prayer for offerings on specified feast days, also in two parallel versions; and the offering list.

All together, the façade texts and the false door texts constitute the main textual program of the tomb (the minor elements being the legends accompanying the relief scenes). Jointly, they convey the two interlocked aspects of autobiography : the presentation of the successful and honorable person, and the ritual utterances designed to maintain his existence in the hereafter.

(No. 2) The inscriptions from the Giza tomb of the architect **Nekhebu** are a good example of the full-fledged autobiography in the Sixth Dynasty. Inscribed vertically on the jambs of the doorway leading into the tomb chapel, the texts are two parts of unequal length. When found by Reisner, the door jambs were a pile of debris in a ruined chapel. Assembled, the longer right-hand text went to Cairo and the shorter left-hand one to Boston.

In the left-hand text, Nekhebu presents himself as an official of King Meryre Pepi I, by whose commission he carried out three building projects. The longer right-hand text elaborates. In a pleasing personal vein it describes the stages of his career from common mason to chief royal architect, and his previous training under, and service to, his elder brother. Thereafter, in a smooth transition, the concluding section outlines Nekhebu's "moral profile" and ends with an emphatic tripartite "appeal to the living" integrated with "warnings to visitors". Here then the career narrative has evolved and the moral and ritual parts are adeptly fitted in.

With regard to parallel and symmetrical inscriptions on false doors it has been observed that often a better sense is obtained if the left-hand texts are read before the right-hand ones. In his review of Moussa-Altenmüller, *The Tomb of Nefer and Ka-hay*, H.G. Fischer remarked : "The sequence followed on the false doors does not, however, follow the logical arrangement used by Gunn (*Teti Pyramid Cemeteries*) or Borchardt (*Denkmäler des AR, CG*) in which the left side takes precedence over the right"<sup>(1)</sup>. When it comes to symmetrically arranged bipartite texts on façades or door jambs, as are those of Hetep-her-akhet and Nekhebu, the question which side to read first should also be considered. In Urk. I, Sethe placed left before right for Hetep- her-akhet but not for Nekhebu, though in the latter case the logical build-up from left-hand to right-hand text is very clear, and Dunham observed it. Elsewhere, for instance in our source no. 5 (Pepiankh the Middle) the bipartite autobiography on the tomb façade is more coherent when read from right to left. And the precedence of right over left has recently been advocated by Edel with regard to the Siut tomb inscriptions<sup>(2)</sup>. In sum, the textual layout should always be considered.

(1) BiOr 31 (1974) 66-69. The remark in the article "Scheintür" in LÄ V, 567, "sind die Titulaturen unterschiedlich, so tragen die rechten Pforten die bedeutenderen", is inconclusive regarding their sequence. See now Strudwick in GM 77 (1984) 35-49.

(2) Edel, Siut, pp. 20, 157 & 164.

(No. 3) The autobiography of **Pepinakht** with the "good name" **Heqaib** takes us to Egypt's southern border at Elephantine, where a succession of royal officials had carved their tombs into the hillside on the westbank, opposite Elephantine island, at a spot now called Qubbet el-Hawa. The titulary of these nobles consists, on the one hand, of courtly titles derived from their being in attendance at the Memphite royal residence, and on the other, of titles and epithets indicating their role as guardians of the southern border and leaders of expeditions into Nubia. The principal title designating an expedition leader was *mr-ʿww*, "overseer of scouts", the term *ʿww* being variously rendered as "interpreters, foreigners, scouts", etc.<sup>(1)</sup>

The tomb of Pepinakht-Heqaib is flanked on the north by that of his son Sabni, and on the south by the tomb of Harkhuf, the most famous of the Elephantine nobles, owing to his detailed autobiographical reports of expeditions into Nubia. These took place prior to the time of Pepinakht, when relations between Egypt and the Nubian chiefs were still peaceful. In Pepinakht's day relations had soured, and he was sent on a punitive expedition and a subsequent pacification. These campaigns along with a foray against Asiatic nomads are the principal topics of his narration. There is nothing in his brief autobiography that accounts for his posthumous fame : his being deified and worshipped in a sanctuary on Elephantine island during the Middle Kingdom. It was the discovery of the tomb of his son Sabni that established the identity of Pepinakht-Heqaib with the sanctified Heqaib of Elephantine island; and it looks as if his magnified worship was inaugurated by his sons<sup>(2)</sup>.

(No. 4) The tomb of **Sabni**, discovered in 1947/48<sup>(3)</sup>, is linked to that of his father Pepinakht-Heqaib by a hall with relief scenes showing the worship of the deceased Pepinakht-Heqaib. The main interest of Sabni's own brief autobiography lies in his report of having built two barges on Nubian soil (in Wawat) in order to transport two big obelisks north to Heliopolis. To accomplish the building project he took with him two companies of soldiers and had them guided by "scouts" (*ʿww*) who were evidently Nubians.

(No. 5) The autobiography of **Pepiankh the Middle** takes us to Qus, the metropolis of the 14th nome of Upper Egypt, where the finely decorated rock tombs of Meir memorialized a sequence of high officials of the Old and Middle Kingdoms. Following after a lengthy titulary, Pepiankh's autobiography singles out his two principal titles : he was high priest of Hathor of Qus and a magistrate (*sr*). Declaring that he had reached the age of

(1) See now Ward, Index, nos. 59-59a & 591.

(2) See now the sumptuous publication : L. Habachi (†), *The Sanctuary of Heqaib* (DAI Abt. Kairo, Archäolog. Veröff. 33 = Elephantine IV) 2v. Mainz 1985.

(3) The tomb has not yet been published, and it must not be confused with the long-known tomb of another Sabni, which is Qubbet el-Hawa No. 26. The new Sabni's brief autobiography, discussed here, is available in preliminary publications.

one hundred years, he looks back with pride on a good life filled with many years of honorable public service. His account combines declarations of righteousness with the narration of specific incidents of his career. And the formulaic declarations are the particular ones in use to characterize the fair-minded and successful magistrate ("I judged between two parties so as to content them", etc.). Thus his moral profile is fully integrated with the narration of his actual career.

## 1. Tomb inscriptions of Hetep-her-akhet

Leiden Museum, from Saqqara  
Fifth Dynasty

Boeser, Beschreibung I, 11 ff. & pl. v; Urk. I, 49-51; Mohr, Hetep-her-akhti, 33-35.

The three texts are inscribed on the façade of the tomb : on the architrave above the entrance, and on the two sides of the entrance, where each accompanies the standing relief figure of the tomb owner.

### *On the Architrave*

*3 lines & 3 short cols.*

(1) An offering-that-the-king-gives (and) an offering-that-Anubis-gives, he who is before the divine booth, the lord of the sacred land : be he buried in the necropolis, in good old age, near the great god.

(2) An offering-that-Osiris-gives, the foremost of Busiris, the lord of Tawer : may he walk on the good ways on which the honored ones walk.

(3) A voice-offering for him on the New Year's feast, the Thoth feast, the First-of-the-year feast, the *Wag* feast, the Sokar feast, the Great feast, the Flame feast, and the Procession-of-Min feast.

(cols.) The Senior Elder of the Portal (*s3b smsw h3yt*), the Priest of Maat (*ḥm-ntr M3't*) Hetep-her-akhet (*Htp-ḥr-3ḥt*).

### *Left of Entrance*

*4 long & 6 short cols.*

(1) The Senior Keeper of Nekhen (*s3b iry Nḥn*) Hetep-her-akhet, he says :

I made this tomb by my very own means,  
I never took the property of anyone.

(2) All persons who worked at it for me,  
they worked praising god for me greatly for it.  
They worked this for me (3) for bread, for beer,  
for clothes, for ointment, for much barley and emmer,  
I never did anything (4) by force against anyone.

As god loves a true thing, I am one honored by the king.

(5) One honored by the great god, (6) the Senior Keeper of Nekhen, Elder of the Portal, (7) Privy to the secrets of the Great Mansion, (8) Priest of Maat, (9) one honored by the great god, (10) Hetep-her-akhhet.

*Right of Entrance*

*4 long cols.*

(1) The Senior Elder of the Portal, Hetep-her-akhhet, he says :

I made this tomb on the side of the West,

in a clean place where no (2) person's tomb was,

in order to guard the possessions of one who went to his *ka*.

Any persons who would enter (3) this tomb uncleanly,

and do something evil against it —

they shall be judged for it (4) by the great god !<sup>1</sup>

I made this tomb because<sup>2</sup> I was honored by the king, who brought me the sarcophagus.

**Notes**

1) On the whole sentence see Edel, *Untersuchungen*, pp. 4-10. — 2) On *m šwy*, "because", see Edel, *Gr.* § 804.

## **2. Autobiography of the architect Nekhebu**

Boston & Cairo, from Giza

Sixth Dynasty : Pepi I

PM III<sup>2</sup> 90. Urk. I, 215-221; Dunham, *JEA* 24 (1938) 1-8. Roccati, *Litt.*, No. 39, pp. 181-186. Titles : Baer, Rank, 37; Drenkhahn, *Handwerker*, 90-94; Strudwick, *Administration*, 113.

The autobiography occupies the two door jambs of a doorway in the tomb chapel. The blocks of the right-hand door jamb were removed to the Cairo Museum, those of the left-hand to the Boston Museum. In Urk. I the longer Cairo text precedes the shorter Boston text; but Dunham placed the left-hand text before the right-hand one, and this arrangement yields the logical order of the narration.

*Left Door Jamb (Boston)*

*1 line & 8 cols.*

(1) The Sole Companion, Royal Architect, Ankh-Meryre-Meryptah,<sup>1</sup> he says :

(2) I am [a builder<sup>2</sup> for] King Meryre, my lord. His majesty sent me [to direct all the works of the king] and I [acted] to his majesty's satisfaction in



Lower and Upper Egypt.

His majesty sent me to direct the construction of (3) the *ka*-mansions of his majesty in Lower Egypt, in the district of the (royal) domain. In the north my warrant<sup>3</sup> was for Lake-City and Chemmis-of-Horus; in the south my warrant was for the Pyramid Men-nefer-Pepi. I returned thence on completion : (4) I had [constructed the *ka*-mansions] there, built and faced, and their wood-work installed, having been carpentered<sup>4</sup> in Lower Egypt. I returned on completion by me.

His majesty rewarded me for it (5) in the presence of [the officials] : his majesty gave me 'pendants'<sup>5</sup> of gold, and bread and beer in very great quantity; and his majesty had a troop of the residence come to me bearing them until they reached my gate with them, (6) because he deemed me more efficient than any other royal architect whom his majesty had sent previously into the district of the royal domain.

His majesty sent me to 'plan' the canal of Chemmis-of-Horus and dig it. (7) I dug it ---<sup>6</sup> until I returned to the residence when it was under water. His majesty rewarded me for it : his majesty gave me 'pendants' of gold, and bread and beer. Great was his majesty's praise of me for what he had sent me on, (8) for being capable at every task, in every work his majesty had sent me on.

His majesty sent me to [Qus] to dig the canal of his --- of Hathor-in-Qus. I took action and (9) dug it [so that] his majesty rewarded me for it. Then, when I returned to the residence, his majesty rewarded me for it very greatly : his majesty gave me 'pendants' of gold, and bread and beer.

*Right Door Jamb (Cairo)*

*1 line & 10 cols.*

(1) [The Sole Companion, Royal Architect, Ankh-Meryre-Meryptah] he says :

(2) [I am a builder for King] Meryre, my lord. His majesty sent me to direct the work of his monument in On. I acted to the satisfaction of his majesty. I spent six years there in directing the work, and his majesty rewarded me for it as often as I came to the residence. It all came about through me by the vigilance I exercised --- (3) ----- there through my own knowledge.

- i Having found me as a common builder, his majesty appointed me :
- ii Inspector of Builders and Team Leader;
- iii Overseer of Builders and Team Leader.
- iv His majesty appointed me Royal Architect-BUILDER;
- v Royal Attendant and Architect-BUILDER.
- vi His majesty appointed me Sole Companion and Royal Architect-BUILDER in the Two Administrations.<sup>7</sup>

His majesty did all this because his majesty favored me greatly.

I am my father's beloved, my mother's favorite.  
I gave them no cause to punish me,  
until they went to their tomb of the necropolis.  
I am one praised of his brothers.

When I was in the service of my brother, the Overseer of Works -----,  
I wrote and I carried his 'palette'.

Then, when he was appointed Inspector of Builders, I carried his  
measuring rod.<sup>8</sup>

(5) Then, when he was appointed Overseer of Builders, I was his  
companion.<sup>9</sup>

Then, when he was appointed Royal Architect-Builder, I governed the  
village for him and did everything in it for him efficiently.

Then, when he was appointed Sole Companion and Royal  
Architect-Builder in the Two Administrations, I reckoned for him all his  
possessions, and the property in his house became greater than that of any  
noble's house.

Then (6) when he was appointed Overseer of Works, I represented him  
in all his affairs to his satisfaction with it.

I also reckoned for him the produce of his estate (*pr-dt*) over a period of  
twenty years. Never did I beat a man there, so that he fell by my hand. Never  
did I enslave any people there. As for any people there (7) with whom I had  
arguments, it was I who pacified them. I never spent the night angry with any  
of them. It was I who gave clothing, bread, and beer to all the naked and  
hungry among them.

I am one beloved of all people<sup>10</sup>,  
I never spoke evil to king or potentate about anyone.  
I am one praised of his father, his mother,  
an owner of costly offerings in the necropolis  
(8) for making their voice-offerings of bread and beer,  
for making their feast on the *Wag* feast, Sokar feast,  
New Year's feast, Thoth feast, First-of-the-year feast,  
First-and-last-of-the month feast, and every good feast,  
celebrated at every season of the year.

O *ka*-servants of the honored ones !

If you wish to be favored by the king,  
and honored by your lords, your fathers in the necropolis,  
then make voice-offerings (9) of bread and beer,  
as I have done for your fathers !

If you wish that I protect you in the necropolis,  
tell your children on the day I go there  
the words of the voice-offering for me !


I am a potent spirit,

I know all that by which one becomes a spirit in the necropolis !

O you who are alive on earth,  
 who shall pass by this tomb !  
 If you wish to be favored by the king,  
 and honored by the great god,  
 (10) enter not this tomb profanely, uncleanly !  
 Anyone who enters it profanely despite this —  
 I will be judged with him by the great god !  
 I will destroy their earth-borne, their homes on earth !

O you who are alive on earth,  
 who shall pass by this tomb !  
 If you wish (11) to be favored by the king,  
 and honored by the great god,  
 say, 1000 bread, 1000 beer for Nekhebu, the honored one !  
 Not shall you destroy a thing in this tomb,  
 I am a spirit [potent] and equipped !  
 Anyone who destroys a thing in this tomb —  
 I will be judged with them by the great god !  
 I am one who speaks the good, repeats the good,  
 I never spoke evil against anyone.

#### Notes

1) Nekhebu's court name; the order of reading its elements is that of Helck, *Beamtentitel*, 105, n. 111. — 2) Dunham read *k3wty* and rendered "workman"; see also Gardiner, *AEO I*, 59\* for the various meanings. — 3) Read *'i* and note the book-roll determinative, hence "warrant". — 4) The verb *nḏr* must denote the whole work of cutting and shaping the timber, rather than mere "glätten", as rendered by Drenkhahn, *Handwerker*, 93, n. 39, in order to account for Nekhebu's pointed remark that the woodwork had been done in Lower Egypt. — 5) The nature of the gold object written  is not known. — 6) The remnants of the signs suggest a period of time. — 7) Nekhebu here lists the six stages of his career, from "common builder" (*qḏ n 'š3t*) to "royal architect-builder" for the dual administration of Upper and Lower Egypt, called "the Two Houses". On the six stages see Helck, *Beamtentitel*, 105, and Baer, *Rank*, 37. One stage got lost in Drenkhahn, *Handwerker*, 91. — 8) In the five sentences that are marked by the repeated *ihḥ* Nekhebu lists the stages of his elder brother's career and his own step-by-step advance as his brother's helper. The previous sentence ("When I was in the service of my brother...") refers to the initial stages of both careers, even though Nekhebu there calls his brother by his highest title, "Overseer of Works". The years of service to his brother — the narration of which adds life and warmth to his autobiography — must have preceded his own rise in the royal administration. — 9) Literally, "his third"; on the expression see Sethe, *Von Zahlen*, 120. — 10) The four-part speech that begins here integrates the "moral profile", the "appeal to the living", and the "warning to visitors".

### 3. The Autobiography of Pepinakht called Heqaib

Aswan, Qubbet el-Hawa Tomb no. 35

Sixth Dynasty : Pepi II

PM V, 237. de Morgan, Catalogue I, 174-176; Urk. I, 131-135. Roccati, Litt. No. 43, pp. 208-211.

The autobiography is inscribed on the façade of the tomb in a circular pattern. It begins above the entrance, on the left, in four lines (A), moves to the right and left of the entrance in two lines each (B,C), continues to the right and left of the entrance in six lines each, and four final lines are written above the entrance on the right (D).

#### *A. Above Entrance, left*

*4 lines*

(1) The Tenant Landholder and Scribe of the Phyle of the pyramid Men-ankh-Neferkare, the Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, and Overseer of Scouts : Heqaib.

(2) The Mayor of the pyramid Men-nefer-Pepi, the Sole Companion, Lector-priest, and Overseer of Scouts, who brings the produce of foreign lands to his lord : Pepinakht.

(3) The Leader of the Phyle of the pyramid Kha-nefer-Mernere, who casts the terror of Horus <into> foreign lands : the honored Heqaib.

(4) The Count, Sole Companion, Councillor, Keeper of Nekhen, Headman of Nekheb, Overseer of all Scouts, one honored by the great god : Pepinakht.

#### *B. Right of Entrance*

(1) The Count, Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, and Lector-priest : Pepinakht.

(2) The Sole Companion, Councillor, Keeper of Nekhen, Headman of Nekheb, and Overseer of all Scouts : Heqaib.

#### *C. Left of Entrance*

(1) The Tenant Landholder and Scribe of the Phyle of the pyramid Men-ankh-Neferkare, the Sole Companion : Heqaib.

(2) The Count, Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, Lector-priest, and Overseer of foreign lands, one honored by the great god : Pepinakht.

*D. Main Text*

*Right, left, and above entrance, right*

*16 lines*

(1) I am one who speaks the good, repeats what is liked; and I never spoke any evil to a potentate about anyone; for I wished to stand well<sup>1</sup> with (2) the great god.

I gave bread to the hungry, clothes to the naked; and I never judged between two parties (3) in a manner to deprive a son of his father's property.

I am one beloved of his father, praised by his mother, (4) one whom his siblings love.

The majesty of my lord sent me to hack up Wawat and Irtjet. I acted (5) to the satisfaction of my lord. I slew a large number of them, sons of the ruler, and excellent 'troop leaders'.<sup>2</sup> I brought a large (6) number of them to the residence as captives, while I was at the head of numerous and strong troops in boldness of heart. My lord trusted (7) me fully<sup>3</sup> in every mission on which he sent me.

The majesty of my lord also sent me to pacify these lands. (8) I acted to my lord's satisfaction in a most excellent manner : I brought the two rulers of these lands to the residence with offerings of (9) live cattle, longhorns and shorthorns, the best ones for the residence, together with sons of the rulers and the 'troop leaders' who were with them. (10) ['I performed'] the tasks of headmen of the South through my excellent vigilance in doing my lord's wish<sup>4</sup>.

The majesty of my lord also sent me (11) to the land of the Asiatics, to bring him the sole companion, ship's captain, and overseer of scouts, An-ankhet, who had been equipping a ship there for Punt (12) when Asiatics belonging to the Sand-dwellers slew him together with the company of soldiers that was with him. (13) ----- (14) ----- (15) ----- his men. I drove to flight and slew some of their men, I together with the company of soldiers that was with me. (16) [The count], Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, Lector-priest, and Overseer of Scouts, who casts the terror of Horus into foreign lands, Pepinakht, whose good name is Heqaib.

**Notes**

- 1) Read *nfr n.i* and see Edel, Untersuchungen, pp. 34f. — 2) The meaning of *mr-šnw* has not been established, see Wb. IV, 509. — 3) Literally, "My lord filled his heart with me". — 4) *N iqr rs(w)-tp.i n irt mrrt nb.i*.

#### 4. Tomb Inscription of Sabni

Aswan, Qubbet el-Hawa Tomb no. 35e  
End of Sixth Dynasty

Preliminary publication : L. Habachi, *Sixteen Studies*, chap. II, with fig. 5 (drawing) and pl. I (photo); also, Habachi, *Obelisks*, pp. 40f. & fig. 16 (drawing). Roccati, *Litt. No. 45*, pp. 214f.

The tomb of Sabni, son of Pepinakht-Heqaib, adjoins that of his father on the north side. As already said, its discovery led to the identification of Pepinakht-Heqaib with the deified Heqaib of Elephantine island. Sabni's brief self-presentation is inscribed on the façade of his tomb, to the west of the entrance. It forms part of a relief scene in which the tall standing figure of Sabni facing toward the entrance is surrounded by numerous small figures bearing offerings. The inscription is in five lines above his head and one column before him, with the main titulary carved in larger hieroglyphs above and before him.

##### *Titulary*

(1) The Count, Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, Overseer of Scouts, Privy to the secrets of the southern doorway<sup>1</sup>, Sabni.

(2) The Royal Seal-bearer, honored before the great god, lord of heaven, Sabni.

##### *Narration*

(1) The Count, Sole Companion, who heralds the words of Horus to his following, the throwstick of Horus in foreign lands : The majesty of my lord sent (me) to build two great barges (2) in Wawat, in order to convey two great obelisks to On. I went forth to Wawat with two troops of soldiers, while the scouts whom I had paid<sup>2</sup> were on the west and east of Wawat, so as to bring back my troop(s) of soldiers (3) in peace. Never did I let a man's sandal or loaf be stolen<sup>3</sup>. I made the two barges so that the majesty of my lord rewarded me for it.

I am an excellent spirit who knows his spell. I know<sup>4</sup> the spell of ascending to the great god, the lord of heaven.

(4) I have given bread to the hungry, clothes<sup>5</sup> to the naked. I have ferried the boatless in (my) boat. I never stole a thing from any man. I never envied<sup>6</sup> any man for his possessions.

##### *Notes*

1) Like his father, Sabni was "overseer of scouts", and the added title, *ḥry sšt3 n r šm'* spells out his guardianship of the southern border. — 2) That this is *šḥtp*, "satisfy", in the sense of "pay", was suggested by Yoyotte, *Or* 35 (1966) 53. — 3) Judging by its occurrence

in the older inscription of Weni (Urk. I, 98ff.) the phrase was a *topos* whose precise wording was varied in accordance with the context. — 4) In both instances, the verb *rḥ* is written *ḥr*. — 5) *Hbs* is misspelled as *ḥs*. — 6) *N sp s3r(.i) s nb ḥr išt.f*. I assume that this is the word *s3r* of Wb. IV, 18f. "Wunsch o.ä.", in a sense not recorded there.

## 5. The Autobiography of Pepiankh the Middle

Meir, Tomb No. D2  
Sixth Dynasty : Pepi II

PM IV, 254. Blackman, The Rock Tombs of Meir, IV, pp. 23-26, pls. iv-ivA; Urk. I, 221-224. Roccati, Litt., No. 43, pp. 234-236. Titles : Baer, Rank, 23 & 26.

The autobiographical text is inscribed in eleven columns each on the two sides of the doorway leading from the forecourt to the hall. Above the doorway is a three-line inscription containing the offering formula and Pepiankh's lengthy titulary. This was evidently meant to be read first, for otherwise the autobiographical narration begins too abruptly.

*Above the Doorway*

*3 lines*

(1) An offering-that-the-king-gives (and) Anubis upon his mountain and before the divine booth, *imy-wt*, lord of the sacred land; (and) an offering that Osiris gives :

May he land in the West in his name;

may he be buried in the necropolis;

may he [receive] the voice-offering on the Sokar feast, the Flame feast, the New Year's feast, the First-of-the-year feast, the *Wag* feast, the Thoth feast, the Good Feast under the great god.

(2) The Prince, Count, Councillor, Keeper of Nekhen, Headman of Nekheb, Chief Justice and Vizier, Chief Scribe of the Royal Tablet, Royal Seal-bearer, Attendant of the Apis, Spokesman of every Butite, Overseer of the Two Granaries, Overseer of the Two Purification Rooms, Overseer of the Storehouse, Senior Administrator, Scribe of the Royal Tablet of the Court, Seal-bearer of the God, Draftsman, Chief Priest of Hathor, Lady of Qus.

(3) Chief Lector-priest, *Sm*-priest, Sole Companion, Lector-priest, Overseer of Upper Egypt in the middle nomes, Royal Chamberlain, Staff of Commoners, Pillar of *Knmwt*, Priest of Maat. Privy to the secret of every royal command, favorite of the king in every place of his.

*Right Side of Doorway*

*11 cols.*

(1) I have spent the time till 100 years among the honored living ones in possession of my *ka*<sup>1</sup>. I spent a great part of this time (2) as Chief Priest of Hathor, Lady of Qus, entering in unto Hathor, Lady of Qus, to see her and to perform her ceremonial with my hands.

(3) I am one honored by the king, I am one honored by the great god, I am one honored by the people. I am one beloved of his father (4) praised of his mother; I am one beloved of his siblings.

I spent all the time that I spent<sup>2</sup> in the function of a magistrate, while (5) doing the good and saying what is wished, in order to attain good repute<sup>3</sup> with the god, in order to grow old [in my town].

(6) I have judged two parties so as to content them, for I knew that is what the god wants. Never did I pass the night angry [with people] (7) because of their behavior toward me<sup>4</sup>.

I have now given my property of a magistrate to be expended in the West, in the ground of (8) the Mistress of Right<sup>5</sup>; in a clean place, in a good place, wherein no work had been done, wherein no others (9) before me had worked.

It is I who opened up this ground. It will serve me as a necropolis; it will do (10) what I desire. I concerned myself with it while among the living. I come to it as one excellently (11) old, having spent my time among the living in the shade of my honor with the king.

*Left Side of Doorway*

*11 cols.*

(1) I spent all the time that I spent in the magistracy in the Office of the Seal until my end. Never did I pass a night with the seal away from me since my being appointed (2) a magistrate.

I was never restrained, I was never imprisoned. As for anything said against me before the magistrates, (3) I came out of it safely, while it fell on the accusers; for I was cleared of it before the magistrates, (4) for they had spoken against me in slander.

O all people who go north, who come south :

(5) As the king lives for you,  
as the god with whom you are lives for you,  
give me bread and beer from what you have,  
present it (6) with your hands,  
offer it with your mouth !

As for those who shall do according to what I have said, -----, (7) it will be done according as they wish. For I am a spirit more equipped than [other] spirits, [more blessed than other blessed] who were before.



(8) I am one honored before the king, before the god. All things succeeded with me because I was a priest of Hathor, Lady of Qus, and because I protected the god (9) to her satisfaction.

O all people who go north, who come south :

As the king lives for you,

as the god with whom you are lives (10) for you,

you shall say, "May Hathor, Lady of Qus, transfigure the ----- and Chief Priest, Pepiankh the Middle !" As for all people who shall say it, (11) Hathor, Lady of Qus, will do what they wish. ----- the god.

I say (it) as one who speaks truly; I do not say (it) as a bigmouth ('3-r).

#### Notes

1) Literally, "under my *ka*." According to Kees, Totenglauben<sup>2</sup>, 50f., to possess one's *ka* meant to be well provided for. — 2) Note the phrase *ir.n.i 'h'w nb ir.n.i*, here and again on the *Left Side, col. 1*; and how it here focusses on the information that Pepiankh had been a magistrate, and in the second instance on the additional information that, as a magistrate, he was in charge of the seal. — 3) *Qd* here in the sense of "good repute", rather than "character". — 4) *Qd* here in the sense of "behavior". — 5) Note the expression *w'rt nbt m3't*, which designated a particular part of the cemeteries of Meir, with the term *w'rt* acquiring added significance later at Abydos.

## II. IN THE FIRST INTERMEDIATE PERIOD

### 1. A TIME OF AUTONOMY

The absolutist royal power of the Old Kingdom had been marked by a highly centralized administration which channelled the country's resources to royal enterprises. Eventually this caused an excessive drain of resources and a visible impoverishment. During the overlong reign of Pepi II malfunctioning at the center shows up in slackened royal control and a corresponding increase of personal power in the hands of men who were royal administrators in the provinces.

When the 6th Dynasty ended in dynastic struggles and was succeeded by a weak and short-lived 7th/8th Memphite Dynasty, the families who held administrative offices in Middle and Upper Egypt, and who had become land-owners in the process, assumed effective control of nomes as "nomarchs", and of towns as "town rulers". And when the 9th/10th Dynasty of Heracleopolis rebuilt royal power on a much reduced scale, the southernmost nomes of Upper Egypt remained essentially autonomous; and the "middle nomes" too, while recognizing Heracleopolitan kingship, were engaged in de facto self-rule and the rebuilding of resources for primarily local consumption.

Apart from royal decrees, the major contemporary sources of the misnamed First Intermediate Period are the private tombs with their inscriptions. It is they who clearly tell us that this was an age of autonomy, a time in which nomes and towns were ruled by local men, and a time in which common men had a chance to rise from obscurity, obtain positions and property in the local context, and build tombs however modest by which to gain a share in the hereafter.

In their biographical inscriptions, nomarchs and town rulers alike claim one central achievement : to have been excellent administrators who brought prosperity to their territories and sustained their peoples in times of famines caused by drought. Minor office holders, the newly risen common men, present themselves as men of worth who rose by their efforts (and sometimes with the help of their town gods) and obtained corresponding rewards : public recognition and personal property.

The three nomarchs singled out here, **Henqu** of Deir el-Gebrawi, **Ankhtifi** of Mo'alla, and **Khety I** of Siut (Nos. 6-8) ruled, respectively, in

the 12th, 3rd, and 13th nome of Upper Egypt. All three speak of having made their regions strong and prosperous. In addition, each nomarch presents himself as a distinctive individual. Henqu was, above all, benign and eager to foster the rise of common men. Ankhtifi describes himself, with much hyperbole and bluster, as a dauntless fighter as well as capable ruler and administrator. Khety of Siut, court-educated, suave, and dignified, was an innovator in constructing irrigation works, and a tireless planner and builder who filled the pastures with cattle, raised a standing fighting force, and built for himself a first-rate rock tomb.

The six lesser ranks who follow (Nos. 9-14) are all "citizens"; a "town ruler" and five town officials. Their autobiographies are not inscribed on tomb walls, but rather on stelae set into tomb walls or niches. They came from modest tombs (mud brick mastabas or rock tombs) whose walls had been left rough. Of rectangular shape, either more wide than tall (in which case they are 'tablets' rather than 'stelae') or standing upright, sometimes with cornices and molding in imitation of false doors, these stones are now the carriers of the autobiography. Depending on their owners' means, they vary in quality from competent to very crude, the large numbers of unskilled work indicating neither provincial backwardness nor general poverty, but rather the rise to selfhood of the common man, with whose appearance in history coarse and clumsy stone work was to outnumber good carving in all later periods too. Being mostly small in size, the stelae required a planned organization of their surfaces in order to accommodate the elements deemed essential : a portrait of the owner, a pictorial and/or verbal reference to offerings, and an autobiography.

The six men typify the new middle class. They are the "good citizens" who serve their towns : **Indi** ruled Thinis in the ablest manner. **Iti** of Imyotru and **Neferyu** of Dendera organized their towns' food supplies in times of famine. The estate manager **Seneni**, also of Dendera, managed supplies and was helpful to travellers. The linen-keeper **Hasi** served under three successive Coptite town rulers. And the soldier **Fegu** distinguished himself in his metier.

As regards recurring themes and formulaic phrases, it should be noted that they are mostly *new* formulations, not inherited from the Old Kingdom, but freshly coined at this time to express the concerns of the new men : their rise to public office; the performance of vital services; and the acquisition of private property. The titularies too have undergone renovation and change. Gone are the long strings of titles of 6th Dynasty royal officials. The new top men, the nomarchs, bear the working title "great headman of the nome", to which they often add "chief priest", as a secondary power title. They preface these by the two highest former court titles, "prince" and "count". The lesser men make do with less; even so, the once grand "sole companion" title sits oddly on the soldier Fegu.

The enigmatic nomarch **Intef** (No. 15) heralds the return of kingship in the rising 11th Dynasty and thereby helps us to conclude our chapter on this vital Time of Autonomy, a time of individual enterprise and personal initiative.

## 6. The Autobiography of the Nomarch Henqu

Deir el-Gebrawi, Tomb no. 67 (UE 12)  
After the Sixth Dynasty

PM IV, 242. N. de G. Davies, *The Rock Tombs of Deir el Gebrawi*, II (1902) 27-31 & pls. xxii-xxvi; Urk. I, 76-79. Schenkel, MHT, no. 34, pp. 41-44.

The tomb has two chambers, the outer of which contains rough wall paintings and a long autobiographical inscription in the center of the east wall. Henqu's titulary occurs twice on the north wall, above an offering scene and above a fishing scene, and the principal titles recur in his autobiography.

### *The Autobiography (East Wall)*

*3 lines & 32 cols.*

(1) O all men of the Mountainviper Nome,  
O [great headmen] of other nomes,  
who shall pass by [this] tomb :  
I am Henqu, the well-and-soft spoken !

(2) Libate, [give] bread-and-beer to one honored before Matit, mistress of Yakemtet, before Nemty [who dwells in] the temples of Mam<sup>1</sup>, to the Prince, Count, *Sm*-priest, Sole Companion, Lector-priest, Great Headman of the Mountainviper nome, one honored before his lord : Henqu.

(3) I am one honored, (4) beloved of fathers,

(5) praised of mothers, (6) who buried the old ones,

(7) who released your youths from the tow-rope (8) which you dragged above the canal ! Lo, you grew old in the hall of officials !<sup>2</sup>

(9) No daughter of yours was ever enslaved, ----- (10) her arms against me. I did not put fetters on any man [for I wished it should go well with me]<sup>3</sup> (11) in this place wherein I am.

I gave bread-and-beer to all the hungry of the Mountainviper nome; (12) I clothed the naked one in it. I also filled its shores (13) with cattle, its pastures with sheep and goats. (14) I also fed the jackals of the mountain and the kites of the sky with hides (15) of sheep and goats, for I wished the man in it to be secure<sup>4</sup>.

(16) I acted as Headman and Overseer of Upper Egyptian grain in this nome. Never did I .....<sup>5</sup> (17) Whoever among you is too young for these words, question your father, he will tell you !<sup>6</sup>

(18) I also resettled the towns that were enfeebled in this nome with persons of other nomes. (19) Those of them who had been servants, I made their positions into those of official(s).

(20) I never deprived a man of his property, so that he would complain of me about it to the town god. I am one who speaks, and repeats, the good.

(21) I never maligned a man to his superior, so that he would complain about it to the god.

I stood, indeed, (22) as Ruler in the Mountainviper nome, together with my brother, the honored sole companion and lector-priest Hemra, the honored one. (23) I was beneficial to it with stables for cattle and dwellings for fishermen. I settled all its mounds (24) with people and cattle [as well as] sheep and goats, in very truth, I do not tell lies here !

(25) I am also (26) one beloved of his father,

(27) praised of his mother,

(28) well-disposed<sup>7</sup> to his brothers,

(29) pleasant to his sisters.

(26a) I am also the priest of his town god, his mouth who put respect of him (27a) into his [fellowmen], for I wished him to be [honored] (28a) by them in the place [in which he is]. (29a) --- this noble one ----- (30) noble ---his father, his mother, his noble brothers. (31) ... --- fathers ---.

(32) I am also an effective spirit, one equipped in [this place] in which I am.

#### Notes

1) The gods of the 12th nome; see now Graefe, Studien. — 2) That is to say, Henqu abolished the corvée of portage and generally fostered the rise of the common man. — 3) On the phrase see Edel, Untersuchungen, pp. 34-37. — 4) So, following Edel, Untersuchungen, p. 35. — 5) Several obscure sentences concerning crimes against women and poor people. — 6) Read *nm:k*, and see Faulkner, Dict., 133, also Roccati, RdE 20 (1968) 191; the meaning is : If you are too young to understand what I say, ask your father to explain it to you." — 7) The term is *mnḥ-qd*.

### 7. The Autobiography of the Nomarch Ankhtifi

#### On the Pillars of his Tomb at Mo'alla (UE 3)

Vandier, Mo'alla. Schenkel, MHT, no. 37, pp. 45-57; Kees, Orientalia 21 (1952) 86-97; Fischer, WZKM 57 (1961) 59-77; Fecht in Schott Fs., 50-60; Lichtheim, AEL I, 85f; Schenkel, Bewässerung, 42-46.

More than any other nomarch, Ankhtifi flaunted his independence, his personal initiative, and his combative courage, in a language both forceful and jaunty. Of his long autobiography, only the first sections, numbered 1-5 in

Vandier's edition, are translated here. In sections 1-2 Ankhtifi relates his conquest and pacification of the nome of Edfu (UE 2) which he joined to his nome of Hieraconpolis (UE 3). In section 3 there is an allusion to his also having concluded an alliance with the nome of Elephantine (UE 1). Most of sections 3-5 are given over to his colorful self-praise. In his youth, when a man named Hetep (perhaps his father) was nomarch of the 3d nome, Ankhtifi recognized royal control in the shape of the "Council of the Overseer of Upper Egypt", residing in the Thinite nome, by inviting the Council on a visit of inspection, as he tells in section 5. Thereafter, no more is heard of authority other than his own. His military forays included an incursion into the Theban nome, where he fought against the joined forces of Thebans and Coptites. This incident suggests that Ankhtifi flourished just before the Theban family of nomarchs embarked on its policy of expansion. Ankhtifi's account of famine relief (section 10) is interesting but unfortunately obscured by major lacunae.

*Nos. 1 & 2*

The Prince, Count, Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, Lector-priest, Troop Commander, Overseer of Scouts, Overseer of foreign lands, Great Headman of the Horus-Throne nome and the nome of Nekhen, Ankhtifi, who says :

Horus brought me to the Horus-Throne nome for life, prosperity, health, to reestablish it, and I did. For Horus wished to reestablish it, because he brought me to reestablish it.

I found the House of Khuu inundated like marshland, abandoned by him who belonged to it, in the grip of a rebel, under the control of a wretch.

I made a man embrace the slayer of his father, the slayer of his brother, so as to reestablish the Horus-Throne nome. No power in whom there is the heat of [strife] will be accepted, now that all manner of evil, whose doing people hate, has been suppressed.

*No. 3*

I am the van of men, the rear of men,  
 one who finds counsel where needed.  
 A leader of the land through active conduct,  
 strong in speech, collected in thought,  
 on the day the three nomes were joined.  
 I am the champion who has no peer,  
 who spoke out when the nobles were silent,  
 on the day fear was cast and Upper Egypt was silent.

*No. 4*

As for anyone on whom I placed my hand, no misfortune ever befell him, for my heart is sealed and my counsel excellent.

As for any fool, any wretch, who sets himself against me, I shall give more than he has given. "Woe", will be said of one accused by me. His 'raft' will take on water like a boat.

I am the champion who has no peer !

*No. 5*

The Prince, Count, Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, Chief Priest, Chief of foreign lands, Chief of Scouts, Great Headman of the Horus-Throne nome and the nome of Nekhen, Ankhtifi the Brave, says :

I am the van of men, the rear of men,  
for my like has not been, will not be,  
my like was not born, will not be born.

I have surpassed the deeds of my forebears, and my successors will not reach me in anything I have done for the next million years.

For when this troop of Hefat is at rest, this land stands at rest. But when it slams its tail like a crocodile, this whole land, south and north, stands trembling.

When I grasp the oars, I find the herds shut in, the bolts bolted. When I travel to the nome of Thinis against one who forgot himself, I find it with its watchmen on the walls. When I hasten to the combat, "Woe", says he, the wretch.

I am the champion who has no peer !

The Count and Troop Commander of the whole nome of Nekhen, Ankhtifi the Brave, says :

I invited the Council of the Overseer of Upper Egypt, who is in the Thinite nome, to confer with ['the Prince'], Count, Chief Priest, and Great Headman of the nome of Nekhen, Hetep. A thing I have not found done by other headmen who have been in this nome, (it was done) by my excellent planning, by my steady counsel, by my nightly vigilance. I am the champion who has no peer !

## 8. The Autobiography of the Nomarch Khety I

Siut Tomb no. 5 (UE 13)

Ninth/Tenth Dynasty

The three large inscribed rock tombs of the necropolis of Siut, the metropolis of the 13th nome of Uppper Egypt, have long been famous for their important historical inscriptions of which, however, owing to persistent destruction and plundering, little now remains. Having first been recorded by members of the French team that produced the monumental *Description de l'Egypte*, the inscriptions on their façades were copied anew by F. Ll. Griffith in 1886, at a time when the façades had already been victimized by

the quarrying and construction activities of the Egyptian government. Griffith utilized the copies of the Description and corrected some of its errors (inevitable errors since the copies were done before the decipherment of hieroglyphs). Now, a century after Griffith's work, the French copies of the façade inscriptions lie before us, corrected and restored, in the splendid study of E. Edel, *Die Inschriften der Grabfronten der Siut-Gräber in Mittelägypten aus der Herakleopolitenzeit* (1984).

On their interior walls, Tombs nos. 3 and 4 contain the much damaged accounts of warfare between the kingdoms of Heracleopolis and Thebes, in which the nomarchs of Siut, subjects and allies of Heracleopolis, acted as defensive shield against the South and bore the brunt of the fighting. The texts of Tomb no. 5, which I have chosen, are of somewhat earlier date; and though the nomarch Khety mentions his army and his fleet, they reflect a time when relations between the two kingdoms were still peaceful, thereby enabling the nomarch to devote his energies to building up the prosperity of his nome.

### A. Introductory Self-Presentation

On the Door Jambs of the Entrance  
After Edel, Siut, 157-177

*Southern (left) side, lines 41-42 & cols. 43-44*

(41) The Prince, Count, Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, Chief Priest of Wepwawet; (42) the Count, Chief Priest of Anubis, lord of *R-qrrt*<sup>1</sup>, one enduring-on-earth : Khety.

(43) The Chief Priest of Osiris, lord of the west, [one beloved of his whole town], [one praised of his whole nome]; [a lord of cattle], (44) a companion of Sekhat-Hor; a [high] Nile, rich in northern grain, an offspring [useful to his towns]men : Khety.

*Northern (right) side, lines 45-46 & cols. 47-48*

(45) [The Prince], Count, Chief Priest of Wepwawet, the honored Khety :

(46) [O you who shall enter] this tomb :  
Praise god for Khety,  
make him an-offering-that-the-king-gives !

(47) He was [an expert] in his office,  
one praised by his town,  
its support who secured its divine offering,  
one wiser than (48) magnates whose hearts are rash;  
one desired by the Winding one<sup>2</sup>,

one whom Ptah created so as to command, one to be remembered on earth : Khety.



## B. The Main Autobiography

### On False Door in Back Wall of Chapel

PM IV, 264. Griffith, Siût, pl. 15; Montet, Kêmi 3 (1930-35) 108-111; Brunner, Siut, 11-12 & 64-67; Schenkel, MHT, no. 57, pp. 71-74; Schenkel, Bewässerung, 29ff. For additional bibliography see Schenkel, MHT, p. 68.

#### *Across the Top*

##### *8 lines*

(1) The Prince, Count, Royal Seal-bearer, [Sole] Companion, [High] Priest of [Wepwawet], lord of Siut, Khety, says :

What any man boasts of is a lie, is something he has not [done]. But (2) all that I did is before [the people of Siut] ---. I gave a gift to this town without the use of corvée labor from Upper Egypt or draft labor from Lower Egypt<sup>3</sup>. (3) I made (my) monument [of it] -----. I 'layed out'<sup>4</sup> a water course of 10 cubits (width), excavating for it in plowland. I installed a gate (4) ----- a thing of lasting use, in a single construction, without dispossessing a household.

I have a broad monument, a straight (5) quay<sup>5</sup> ----- I nourished the town. I made the workman an eater of northern barley. Water rations were given out in midday (6) to let the weary recover. ----- I made a sluice-way<sup>6</sup> for this town, while Upper Egypt was in a bad way<sup>7</sup>, no water to be seen. (7) I sealed the borders ----- by the sealing. I made the high [ground] into marshland. I made the inundation flood the old mounds. (8) I let the plowlands be [inundated] while every neighborhood<sup>8</sup> thirsted. [Everyone had] inundation to his heart's content, and I gave water to his neighbors that he should be at peace with them.

#### *Right Side, cols. 9-16*

(9) I am one rich in northern barley while the land is in drought; one who nourished the town by the *m'd3t* measure<sup>9</sup>.

I let (10) the citizen and his wife, the widow and her son, carry away northern barley. I remitted (11) all taxes --- that I found assessed by my forebears.

I filled the pastures with dappled cattle, (12) the man --- 'owning' many kinds. Cows gave birth to twins; byres were full of (13) --- calves. I was favored by Sekhat-Hor, so that one said, "splendid !" <sup>10</sup>

I am one rich in cattle, (14) whose ox ----- that he lives well.

I am one rich in monuments for the temple (15) -----, [one who increased] what he had found, who renewed all divine offerings. I am one favored (16) -----.

I am one strong of bow, mighty with his arm,

(17) one much feared by his neighbors. I formed a troop of spearmen --- [a troop of] bowmen, (18) the best 'thousand' of Upper Egypt. I have a fine fleet -----, the trusty (*mḥ-ib*) of the king (19) on his journey south. I am one alert to what is said to him, one [calm in time of] distress.

I have a lofty (20) tomb, a wide stairway, a first-rate embalming room<sup>11</sup>. I am the beloved of [the king], whose officials know his eminence; (21) the foremost of Upper Egypt, to whom rulership was given as a man of one cubit, who was front-ranked among the youths - (22) he received swimming instruction together with the royal children.

I am a straight natured one (*'q3-bi3t*)<sup>12</sup> (23) free of enmity to his lord, who raised him as a child. Siut is content under (24) my governance, Hnes praises god for me; Upper and Lower Egypt say, "A pupil of the king!"<sup>13</sup>

### Notes

- 1) On this "entrance to the underworld" as name of the necropolis of Siut see Edel, Siut, 47f. — 2) On the reconstructed readings, and on the hitherto unknown *ifnw*-serpent, see Edel, Siut, 167ff. — 3) So, following Franke, *Verwandschaft*, 213ff., where *h3w* and *s'qyw* laborers are studied. — 4) It is not clear what meaning should be assigned to *q3b3*; Schenkel, *Bewässerung*, 30, opted for "blockieren". — 5) Since Khety has just spoken of his outstanding waterworks, the word written *mrt* is more likely to be *mryt*, "quay, shore", rather than *mrrt*, "street, quarter". — 6) On the word ' with water determinative see Schenkel, *Bewässerung*, 30 & 33f. — 7) The word spelled *pqw* still awaits its interpreter. — 8) The word *gs.wy*, "neighborhood, neighbors", is discussed by Edel, Siut, 81. — 9) I.e., he allotted grain liberally. On the *m'd3t* measure see Müller, *JEA* 58 (1972) 301f. — 10) In text A, line 44, Khety had already spoken of his good relations with the cow-goddess Sekhat-Hor. As to the "saying", I read it, *qd sṯswt pw*, while Schenkel read, *qd.s ṯswt pw*. — 11) So also Edel, Siut, 112, whereas Schenkel, *Bewässerung*, 31, rendered, "mit breiter Treppe vor der Balsamierungsstätte", which agrees with Wb. II, 409.12 & Belegstellen: "auch Treppe zum Grabe, *rd ḥnt pr-nfr*, Siut V, 20." But *pr-nfr* is the embalming workshop, not the tomb; and would the workshop not have been situated in the valley and hence below the stairway, rather than above it where the tomb was? Schenkel's rendering would also void the tripartite sentence structure which is so frequent here. — 12) Note the word *bi(3)t* appearing for "character, nature", in place of the older term *qd*. — 13) Here too Schenkel's new rendering in *Bewässerung*, 31: "Lykonpolis war zufrieden unter der Behandlung durch Herakleopolis und dankte Gott dafür", eliminates the tripartite sentence and, moreover, introduces a political statement — subservience of Siut to Herakleopolis — which seems un-Egyptian in being direct rather than allusive and general rather than personal: the town recognizing royal control, rather than the nomarch being a loyal follower of the king.

## 9. Stela of the Town Ruler Indi of Thinis

From Naga ed-Deir (UE 8)  
Metropolitan Museum 25.2.3

Dunham, Naga-ed-Dêr, no. 78, pp. 92-94 and pl. xxviii.2; Hayes, Scepter, I, pp. 139 & 141 and fig. 83. Schenkel, MHT, no. 260, p. 183; Lichtheim, AEL I, 84f.

A rectangular limestone stela, 67.3 x 47.5 cm., in painted sunk relief of good quality. The slender standing figures of Indi and his wife fill the lower left side. The inscription is in four lines above and three columns on the lower right. Of unknown provenience, the stela has been assigned to Naga ed-Deir on stylistic grounds.

(1) An offering-that-the-king-gives (and) Anubis, he upon his mountain, *imy-wt*, the lord of the necropolis : a voice-offering (2) for the Count, Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, Lector-priest, the honored Indi (3) who says :

I am a citizen excellent in warfare, a comrade of 'fighters'<sup>1</sup>. (4) I am one loved by his father, praised by his mother, beloved of his siblings, (5) pleasant to his relations.

One raised from the back of his father's house<sup>2</sup>, by the might of Onuris<sup>3</sup>, (6) Ruler of Thinis with the wish for repute<sup>4</sup>, with the wish to act for the best. One who speaks with his mouth, acts with his arm. (7) No man will be found who would speak against the honored Indi.

*Above the heads of Indi and his wife*

1000 of bread, 1000 of beer, 1000 of beef, 1000 of fowl, 1000 of alabasters, 1000 of clothing, 1000 of everything good for the honored Indi. His beloved wife, the Sole Royal Ornament, Priestess of Hathor, honored before the gods of Thinis, Mutmut.

### Notes

1) The word *h3dw*, with bird and seated-man determinatives, is unknown. Schenkel proposed to read *dh3w*, from *dhi*, "humble", and rendered, "ein Kamerad seiner Untergebenen(?)". But one expects a word with a meaning similar to "warfare", and two of the Wb. entries under *h3d* suggest the notions of being "excited" or "aggressive". Note also that the bird does not look like the small-bird determinative (G37) which occurs in the same line in the word *nqs*. — 2) On this phrase see now Franke, *Verwandtschaft*, 266f., where it is made plausible that the "back of the house" here means the family quarters where the children grew up. — 3) That the town god is given the credit for Indi's rise to eminence is characteristic of the political climate of the First Intermediate Period. As Fischer put it in connection with a similar sentence, "such phrases, along with other evidence, indicate that

the local god replaced the king as the ultimate source of support and authority during the Heracleopolitan period" ("Three Stelae from Naga ed-Deir", Dunham Fs., 61). I should like to add that it also tells something about "Personal Piety", about which more will be said later. — 4. *Qd*, "character", here spelled *qdw*, in the sense of "good repute", as also in the autobiography of Pepiankh the Middle (see p. 20, n. 3).

## 10. Stela of the Treasurer Iti of Imyotru

From Gebelein (UE 4)  
Cairo 20001

Lange-Schäfer, Grabsteine, I, 1-2 & IV, pl. i; Vandier in *Mélanges Maspero* I, 137-145. Fischer, *WZKM* 57 (1961) 69-72; Schenkel, *MHT*, no. 39, pp. 57f.; Lichtheim, *AEL* I, 88f.

A limestone tablet, 47 x 75 cm. On the left are the seated figures of Iti and his wife. The inscription consists of one line across the top and ten columns on the right.

Almost certainly a contemporary of Ankhtifi, the town treasurer Iti presents himself as the real power in his hometown of Imyotru (near Gebelein), at the southern edge of the Theban nome. His report of having supplied grain to Imyotru, to near-by Hermonthis, and to Hefat in the third nome, agrees with Ankhtifi's account of having attacked the Thebans at the behest of Hermonthis in indicating that the towns in the southern border district of the Theban nome strained away from Theban dominion. Very typical for the time is his emphasis on having staved off famine in the home region, and on his having acquired property, notably land and herds.

(1) An offering-that-the king-gives (and) Anubis, he upon his mountain, *imy-wt*, the lord of the necropolis : a voice-offering for the honored Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, (2) Seal-bearer of the God<sup>1</sup>, Iti, who says :

I am a worthy citizen who acts with his arm; I am a great pillar (3) in the Theban nome, a man of standing in the Southland.

I nourished (4) Imyotru in hard years, when four hundred men despaired of it, and I did not (5) seize a man's daughter, nor did I seize his field<sup>2</sup>.

I gathered ten herds of goats (6) with herdsmen for each herd. I acquired two herds of cattle, one herd of asses. I acquired all kinds of small cattle. I made a 50 (cubit) boat, another (7) of 30 (cubits).

I gave Upper Egyptian barley to Iuni and Hefat after Imyotru had been supplied, while the Theban nome (8) [fared north] and south. Never did I let Imyotru fare north and south to another nome !<sup>3</sup> Whether I served (9) a great

lord, or served a small lord, no fault of mine occurred.

I built a house, a [field] ---<sup>4</sup> filled with all kinds of riches, and people said, "One free of robbing another !"

Made for him by [his eldest son, his beloved I] ---.

*Above the woman's head* : His beloved wife Sent.

#### Notes

1) In contrast with Indi of Thinis, Iti, as his titles indicate, was not town "ruler" (ḥq3) but rather "treasurer" (sd3wty nṯr) of the town and its temple, hence administrator in charge of finances and supplies. — 2) I.e., taking emergency measures to stave off famine did not include enslaving and dispossessing people. Compare the similar disclaimers of the nomarch Henqu (No. 6, p. 23). — 3) In search of food. — 4) See Vandier's discussion of the lacuna.

### 11. False Door Stela of the Treasurer Neferyu

From Dendera (UE 6)  
Metropolitan Museum 12.183.8

Hayes, Scepter I, 139f. & fig. 82; Vandier, Manuel II, 440 & fig. 285; Fischer, JARCE 2 (1963) frontispiece & p. 19; Fischer, Dendera, 206-209 & pl. xxv. Schenkel, MHT, no. 26, pp. 36f.

A brightly painted false-door stela, 115.5 cm. high, with cavetto cornice and torus molding. The usual offering-table scene in the entablature is bordered above and below by parallel offering formulae in one line each (A, B). Below it, to the left and right of the door niche, is the main text in four columns each (C,D). The precedence of the left side over the right is here clearly marked by the fact that the self-presentation beginning with *dd* starts on the left, at the top of the first column, below the name of Neferyu, which ended the offering formula B.

A. An offering-that-the-king-gives (and) Osiris, lord of Busiris : a voice-offering to Neferyu (*Nfr-iw*). (2) 1000 water libations and bread, 1000 beer, 1000 beef, fowl, and gazelles, 1000 oryx, 1000 alabasters, 1000 clothing, 1000 of all good things for the honored Neferyu.

B. An offering-that-the-king-gives (and) Anubis, he upon his mountain, *imy-wt* : a voice-offering to Neferyu,

C. who says : I gave bread to the hungry, clothes (2) to the naked.

I ferried the boatless (3) in my own ferry boat.

I gave things to one I knew (4) as to one I knew not.

- The Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, the honored Neferyu.
- D. O you who live on earth, who love (2) life !  
 I nourished the great in the year of (3) "belt-tightening"<sup>1</sup>.  
 I acted greatly with my arm, so as to endure with my children.  
 (4) It is (the god) Iq(r) who did it for me<sup>2</sup>, so that I was made greater  
 than magnates and magistrates.  
 My entire town is my witness !<sup>3</sup>

### Notes

1) *Rnpt nt htm rhs*. The meaning of the word *rhs*, with bag determinative (V. 33) has not been established; see Fischer's discussion in Dendera, 207f., where he rendered "closing the pouch" ? and suggested it might have the figurative meaning "stomach", a suggestion that seems to me plausible and emboldened me to render the phrase as "belt-tightening". — 2) So, following Fischer, *loc. cit.* — 3) Here I should like to propose that the damaged space under *srw* has room enough for a reed-leaf, hence I would read : *[i]w niwt.i m mtrt.wi*; the spelling of *niwt* with *n* is attested in Wb. II, 210.6. To read *nw niwt.i*, etc., and thus attach it to the foregoing "magnates and magistrates", creates an overlong and very awkward sentence.

## 12. Stela of the Estate Manager Seneni

From Dendera (UE 6)  
 Edinburgh 1910.96

Fischer, Dendera, pp. 195, 209-213, fig. 43 & pl. xxvi.

A rectangular limestone stela with cornice and molding, 91 x 61 cm. Below the cornice are four lines of text, the fourth being written above the offering table scene, which occupies the center (A). Below the scene, the text continues in one line across and five columns on the lower right (B). On the lower left is the standing figure of Seneni, behind whom stood his wife, whose figure is now destroyed.

A. An offering-that-the-king-gives (and) Osiris, lord of Busiris in all his places : a voice-offering for the Royal Seal-bearer, (2) Sole Companion, Royal Carpenter, Overseer of the Oarsmen of Hathor, Eldest of the Dockyard, Estate Manager<sup>1</sup>, Seneni (*Snni*), (3) he says :

O you who live, o you on earth,  
 who love life, who hate death<sup>2</sup>, say :

(4) 1000 water, 1000 bread, 1000 beer, 1000 beef, 1000 fowl, 1000 gazelles, 1000 oryx, 1000 clothes, 1000 everything good to Seneni.

B. The Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, Royal Carpenter, Eldest of

the Dockyard, Estate Manager, the honored Seneni, he says :

(2) I gave bread to the hungry, clothes to [the naked],

(3) I ferried the boatless in my ferry boat.

[I did not say] (4) "Go away" to one who came to me,  
rather did I conduct the traveller.<sup>3</sup>

[I gave southern grain] (5) to all estate people, as keeper of the daily supplies, and no [fault of mine] occurred.

(6) I am one loved of his lord, who does what he praises every day,  
one [whose eminence] his town knows.

#### Notes

1) After the two honorary titles, Seneni lists four working titles : *mqḥw-nswt*, *mr ḥniw ḥwt-ḥr*, *smsw whrt*, *ḥq3 ḥwt*. For details see Fischer's discussion, *loc. cit.*, 211. — 2) To the "appeal to the living" in the form developed during the Sixth Dynasty, the First Intermediate Period added this new version, which is characteristic of man's growing self-knowledge and candor : everybody loved life and hated death. — 3) This seems to me to be the meaning of *sb.n.i ṣ3s rf*, with *rf* being the particle and not the preposition with suffix. As manager of the dockyard at Dendera, Seneni was in a position to be either helpful or obstructive to travellers, and he chose to be helpful. Compare the similar statement by Ameney of the Oryx nome, that he gave a welcome to everyone and conducted the traveller north or south (p. 137).

### 13. Stela of the Overseer of Linen Hasi

From Naqada (UE 5)  
Cairo 1649

Borchardt, *Denkmäler I*, 110f.; *Urk. I*, 151f.; *TPPI*, no. 8, pp. 5-6; Fischer, *Inscriptions*, no. 18, pp. 65-67, pl. xvii. Schenkel, *MHT*, no. 19, pp. 30f.

A limestone tablet, 52 x 84 cm. The owner and his wife are seated on the left, the man holding an ointment jar to his face. The inscription begins in one line across the top and continues in six short lines on the right.

Hasi's principal title, "Overseer of Linen", is given in two versions : as "Overseer of Linen of the Great House", and as "Overseer of Linen" for the Coptite chiefs Dagi and Djef. Similarly, he calls himself both "beloved of his lord", and "praised of his chiefs". Here we seem to have the case of a minor official who had first been in the service of a king, presumably a Memphite king, at a time when the royal administration was still recognized; thereafter he came into the service of three successive Coptite "chief priests", who were probably the actual rulers of Coptos.

(1) An offering-that-the-king-gives (and) Anubis, he upon his

mountain, *imy-wt*, the lord of the necropolis : a voice-offering for the Sole Companion, (2) Overseer of Linen of the Great House (*mr sšr n pr-'3*), Great one of the tens of Upper Egypt (*wr mḏw šm'w*), one honored by his lord, Hasi (Ḥ3si), (3) who says :

I am one loved of his lord, praised of his chiefs. I have served as Overseer of Linen for the Prince, Count, Overseer of Priests, Dagi (*D3gi*) (5) and his son, the Overseer of Priests, Djef (*Df*), (6) and no fault of mine occurred. (7) I am today under the Overseer of Priests, Khety (*Hty*).

#### Notes

1) On the title, "Great One of the tens of Upper Egypt", see now Ward, Index, no. 721, with bibliography. — 2) The Overseer of Priests Djef, or Djefi, is mentioned on two other Naqada stelae, nos. 17 and 19 in Fischer, Inscriptions.

### 14. Stela of the Soldier Fegu

From Naqada (UE 5)  
Strasbourg 344

Spiegelberg et al., Grabsteine I, no. 14, p. 10, pl. 9; Fischer, Inscriptions, no. 16, pp. 62f., pl. xvi. Schenkel, MHT, no. 308, pp. 201f.

A coarsely carved limestone tablet, 33.5 x 45 cm., whose upper right corner is missing. The relief figure of Fegu stands on the left. He holds a bow and a sheaf of arrows; his long hair is bound with a fillet. On the right is the inscription incised in seven lines. In front of the man's head is the legend : His good name, Ankhu (*'nhw*). As Fischer remarked (*op. cit.* 58f.) more than a third of the men on stelae from Naqada are shown with bow and arrows; and the weapons are likely to indicate soldiering and police work rather than hunting. The weapons are also conspicuous on stelae from the Theban nome but are rare further north, at Dendera and Naga ed-Deir.

Fegu's only title, "Sole Companion", and his report that he was sent on missions, indicate that he held a certain rank. Yet he was evidently an ordinary man, one of those common men who had advanced in this time of local self rule and now sported titles such as "sole companion" which had once been the privilege of high ranking courtiers.

(1) [An offering-that-the-king] gives (and) Anubis, he upon his mountain, (2) [*imy-wt*], the lord of the necropolis : a voice-offering for (3) the Sole [Companion], the honored Fegu (*Fgw*), (4) who says :

I am the bravest of the brave, (5) I am the swiftest of the swift<sup>1</sup>. (6) The Overseer of Priests, Weser (*Wsr*) sent me (7) on all kinds of missions, and I returned safely.



## Notes

1) *Ink qn m-m qnw, ink sin m-m sinw*, literally : "I am the brave one among the brave, I am the swift one among the swift." Lauding one's bravery, or capability, became a cliché of biographical inscriptions (see the listing in Janssen, *Autobiografie I*, 35-36 for *qni*). A New Kingdom example is Urk. IV, 968.15. What is interesting about all self-lauding phrases that became formulaic is how the scribes varied, changed, and adapted them, so as to ring changes and obtain new effects. Compare the phrase *ink qn ḥw qn r.f.* in No. 43, p. 103.

## 15. Stela of the Nomarch Intef

From Thebes (Dra Abu'l-Naga)  
Cairo 20009

PM I<sup>2</sup> 595. Lange-Schäfer, *Grabsteine I*, 8f.; TPPI, no. 13, p. 8; Fischer, *Dendera*, 130, 199f. & fig. 39. Schenkel, MHT, no. 43, p. 64.

A hybrid false-door stela of painted limestone, competently carved, measuring 106 x 73 cm. In the upper third of the stela is the main inscription in three lines. Below, Intef is seated on the left in a kiosk, facing an offering table and an array of offerings. He is surrounded by five attendants, one of whom, the butler Nakhtpui, offers him a bowl of beer. The bottom register has a bolted door in the center; on its left an oryx and an ibex are led up; on its right are three short lines of text and a butchering scene.

(1) A offering-that-the-king-gives (and) Anubis, he upon his mountain, *imy-wt*, the lord of the necropolis : a voice offering for (2) the Prince, Count, Great Headman of the Theban nome (*ḥry-tp '3 n w3st*); trusty of the king at the narrow southern doorway<sup>1</sup>; great pillar who sustains (3) his Two Lands; the Chief Priest (*mr ḥm-nṯr*), one honored before the great god, lord of heaven, Intef (*Ini-it.f*).

(*Bottom, right*) Libation and <1000> bread, 1000 beer, 1000 (2) alabasters, clothing, beef, fowl, 1000 of (3) everything good for the honored Intef.

## Notes

1) On the epithet, *mḥ-ib n nswt m r g3w rsy*, see Kees, *ZÄS* 70 (1934) 83-86. Its use here has occasioned much debate regarding the identity and chronological position of the nomarch Intef, and to which king he professed loyalty by this epithet and the next one, "great pillar who sustains his (i.e. the king's) Two Lands" (*iwn '3 s'nh t3wy.f*). Diverging interpretations have been argued by Fischer (*Inscriptions*, 42 and *Dendera*, 130) and Gomaà (*Zwischenzeit*, 128 and 138ff.). Fischer suggested a Ninth Dynasty Heracleopolitan, and Gomaà an Eighth Dynasty Memphite, as the king recognized by the nomarch Intef. And

where was the "narrow southern doorway", at Elephantine, or at some more northerly mountain pass in southern Upper Egypt ? These and many other gaps in the present-day understanding of the politics and chronology of the First Intermediate Period can be bridged only if significant new materials are published. In any case, it is legitimate to place the nomarch Intef at the end of this group of texts, as a harbinger of the future in the Southland under the rising Eleventh Dynasty.

## 2. ABOUT WOMEN

It is mere hyperbole to claim, as is now sometimes done, that the women of ancient Egypt enjoyed full equality with men. True is that their social and legal status was much above that of women elsewhere in the ancient world. Inter alia it included their ability to consecrate the funerary monuments of deceased male relations.

During the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties the burials of highborn ladies included the same funerary prayers that had been formulated for men : requests for offerings and a good burial in the west, and the freedom to travel the good ways of the west and to ascend to the "great god". But other than having certain ritual functions in the temple cult, ladies did not hold public office. Nor did they relate events of their lives in autobiographical tomb inscriptions.

For women, as for all segments of the population, the First Intermediate Period brought an advance in the display of selfhood. The cemetery of Naga ed-Deir (UE 8), so rich in modest tombs and stelae of the rising middle class, yielded a goodly number of grave stelae of women, that is to say, stelae showing women not in the company of their husbands but alone. Here are three samples from Naga ed-Deir.

I. Dunham, Naga-ed-Dêr, no. 21, p. 35, pl. xii,1.

The woman stands on the left before an offering array and holds a lotus flower to her face. Above her and on the right is the inscription in two lines across the top and six columns on the right.

(1) An offering-that-the-king-gives (and) Anubis, he upon his mountain, *imy-wt*, the lord of the sacred land : a voice-offering of bread and beer. (2) (And) Osiris, lord of Busiris, Khentamenthes, lord of Abydos : (3) a voice-offering of bread and beer for her in her tomb of the necropolis (4) of the western desert, in peace, in peace before the great god :

(5) May she land and cross heaven (*bi3*),

(6) May her hand be taken by the great god, lord of the sky (*pt*) (to lead her) to his pure (7) places.

A voice-offering of bread and beer for the Sole Royal Ornament,

Priestess of Hathor, (8) one honored before the gods of Thinis, Hedwi (*Hḏwi*).

II. Dunham, Naga-ed-Dêr, no. 53, pp. 65f., pl. xvi, 1.

The woman stands on the lower left holding a lotus flower to her face. The inscription is in three lines across the top, four short lines on the lower right, and one column in the center. The carving is competent.

(1) An offering-that-the-king-gives (and) Anubis, he upon his mountain, *imy-wt*, the lord of the sacred land : (2) May she be buried well in her tomb of the necropolis of the western (3) desert.

A voice-offering of bread and beer for her, for the one honored before the gods of Thinis, (4) the praised one of her husband, (5) the great *imyt-wrt* (priestess) of excellent character (*nfr qd*), (6) the Royal Ornament, Noblewoman, Royal Acquaintance, and (7) Priestess of Hathor, (8) Ankhnes-Pepy (*'nh-n.s-ppy*) whose good name is Neni (*Nni*).

III. Dunham, Naga-ed-Dêr, no. 87, pp. 107f., pl. xxxiv.

The woman stands on the lower left holding a lotus flower to her face and facing an offering table and an attendant who presents a leg of beef. The inscription is in three lines across the top and four columns on the lower right side.

(1) An offering-that-the-king-gives (and) Anubis (and) Osiris, lord of Busiris, (2) Khentamenthes, lord of Abydos : a voice-offering of bread and beer for her in (3) her tomb of the necropolis of the western desert, on the Wag-feast, the Thoth-feast, (4) First-of-the-year feast, Flame-feast, New Year's feast, *s3d*-feast, (5) Procession-of-Min feast, and on every beautiful feast (6) as requirement of every day, (for) the one honored (7) before the great god, the Sole Royal Ornament, the Priestess of Hathor, Aamet (*'3mt*).

The men who erected grave stelae for their wives (or sometimes a son for his mother and a father for his daughter) desired them to share their own transfigured afterlife but felt no need to supply biographical information other than names, titles, and an occasional reference to "excellent character". Nor did the Middle Kingdom provide any significant enlargement of this repertoire. In the New Kingdom, however, and even more in the Late Period, an occasional expansion into autobiography takes place, most famously on the Ptolemaic stela of Taimhotep (BM 147). But even then it was the men's prerogative to erect the stelae and compose their texts. Women did not produce their own autobiographical inscriptions. On their tomb stones they do not speak in their own voices.

### III. UNDER THE ELEVENTH DYNASTY, I: THE MATURE AUTOBIOGRAPHY

With the consolidation of the Theban monarchy in the reign of Wahankh Intef II there comes a growing amount of vigorous and competent art work, of which the chief surviving examples are the biographical stelae of royal officials. The horizontal rectangular tablet as the locus of autobiography is still prominent (Nos. 16-17 & 20). But the upright rectangle, the "stela" proper, is gaining favor. Our two examples of it (Nos. 18 & 19) are both excellently carved, as is the horizontal tablet-with-frame, No. 20. Furthermore, Nos. 18 and 19, the stelae of **Rediu-Khnum** and **Tjetji**, are first-rate representatives of the literary style of autobiography now blossoming in the Theban monarchy. Its counterpart in the Heracleopolitan realm may be studied in the tomb inscriptions of the nomarchs of Siut. Thus in the heyday of the two rival kingdoms, we can follow the growth of the autobiography, which is now progressing on a double track : the expansive autobiography in the tomb, divisible into sections and recorded on different surfaces (façade, interior walls, pillars, false doors) and the condensed autobiography, restricted to the limited space of the stela.

Undoubtedly, the tomb owners and their scribes were aware of the differing potential : the possibility given by the space of tomb walls to elaborate the autobiography in conjunction with pertinent ritual texts, and on the other hand, the need to compress the self-presentation into a small space. The ambitious tomb owner could overcome the space limitation of the stela by having several stelae in his tomb. Yet in terms of style the difference between the two types remained clear : the stela was designed to function as a self-contained monument. Therein lay its specific vitality : modest in size and self-contained, the stela was adaptable to different contexts. Its format was, moreover, transferable to expedition reports inscribed on rock faces in mining regions. The result was a blend of autobiography with the account of a particular mining commission. One outstanding example of this mixed genre, evolving at this time, is included here: the autobiography of **Henu** (No. 21).

On the two tablets of **Djari** (Nos. 16-17) one can observe how the independence of the single stela was modified to yield the planned interdependence of a pair of stelae that had stood together in the tomb, probably facing each other. The Cairo tablet has an interesting autobiographical narration; the Brussels tablet adds a formulaic self-laudation. Each tablet is completed by the relief figure of Djari and an offering formula, one of them

addressed to Osiris, the other to Anubis.

In the autobiographies of Reditu-Khnum and Tjetji (Nos. 18 & 19) the literary style can be seen to be leaping forward in the direction of eloquence and rhetorical sophistication. The language is attaining a suppleness and richness of expression which go far beyond what was available in the 6th dynasty. And the growing linguistic resourcefulness was applied primarily to the stylized depiction of the individual person in his new role : the perfect civil servant in his relation to the king (or queen).

The ever longer self-laudations are fuelled by novel rhetorical devices. The peak of the new ornate *Kunstprosa* is reached in the inscriptions of Intef son of Tjefi and Henu (Nos. 20 & 21) dating from the reigns of Mentuhotep II and III.

## 16.-17. Two Stelae of the Overseer of Scouts Djari

From his Theban Tomb (Dra Abu'l-Naga)

Cairo JE 41437 & Brussels E. 4985

Reign of Wahankh Intef II

PM I<sup>2</sup> 596. Petrie, Qurneh, pp. 3, 16-17, pls. ii-iii; TPPI, nos. 18-19, p. 14; Limme, Stèles, p. 19 & photo (Brussels stela). Schenkel, MHT, nos. 72-73, pp. 99-101; Schenkel in Arnold, Gräber, 57.

Two rectangular limestone tablets carved in a style whose crudeness seems at odds with Djari's rank. The awkwardness extends to the orthography and sentence structure, but there is plenty of vigor and liveliness. Moreover, the two tablets were carefully planned to complement each other.

The Cairo Tablet, measuring 42 x 108 cm., begins with an offering formula addressed to Osiris and then narrates Djari's important mission for his king, Intef II, entrusted to him because he had proved his worth in battle and in council. The Brussels Tablet, measuring 42 x 78 cm., has an offering formula addressed to Anubis and adds Djari's moral profile, couched in formulaic phrases. On the Cairo Tablet Djari stands on the left; on the Brussels Tablet he is seated on the left with his wife.

### 16. Cairo Tablet

(5 long lines, 1 col. & 4 short groups)

(1) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to)<sup>1</sup> Osiris, lord of Busiris, Khentamenthes, lord of Abydos <for> the Count, Sole Companion, Estate Manager, Overseer of (2) Scouts (*ḥq3-ḥwt mr-'ww*) Djari (*D3ri*) who says : Horus Wahankh, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Son of Re, Intef (3) born of Nefru<sup>2</sup>, sent <to me> after I had battled with the House of Khety in the west of Thinis, and caused (4) his commission to come : the great ruler made me

fare north to procure food, consisting of Upper Egyptian barley, for this whole land<sup>3</sup>, from Elephantine to the Aphroditopolite nome<sup>4</sup>, because of my knowing matters (5) and speaking well — I am a weighty one among the officials and calm at the moment of blows<sup>5</sup> — with this message<sup>6</sup> : "Approach me, Khety, you who raised a storm over the nome, mighty ruler ! (6) I made my boundary at Wadi Hesy."

The Count, Sole Companion, (7) Estate Manager, Overseer of Scouts (8) Djari (9) the excellent and justified. (10) I am one loved of his town, praised of his god.

### Notes

1) On the change in the offering formula see p. 44, n. 1. — 2) It is time everyone understood that *ms Nfrw* means "born of Nefru", and not "fashioner of beauty", and that *ms* alternates with *ms n*. The proof is in the stela of Hetepi, also from the time of Intef II (published by Gabra, MDIK 32 (1976) 45ff.) where *ms n Nfrw* is written ! See now also Schenkel in GM 96 (1987) 93f. with another example of *ms n Nfrw*. — 3) Reading *wnmt nt it šm' n 13 p n mi qdf*, as Schenkel did. — 4. The boundaries of the Theban kingdom after Intef II had advanced into the 10th Nome and set his frontier at Wadi Hesy, as he tells here and on his own mortuary stela, Cairo 20512. The advance seems to have been of short duration; see the discussion on p. 45, n. 14. — 5. *W3 h-ib 3t šht*; *w3 h-ib* means "calm, patient, reasonable". — 6. *R-ḡd* introduces the direct speech of King Intef, which Djari is to convey verbatim to King Khety, so as to assure the Heracleopolitan king that Djari's mission is a peaceable one designed only to procure food.

## 17. Brussels Tablet

(6 lines & 1 col.)

(1) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Anubis, he upon his mountain, *imy-wt*, the lord of the necropolis : a voice-offering for him : 1000 of bread, beer, beef, fowl, gazelles, (2) oryx, alabaster, clothing, and every good thing (for) the Count, Sole Companion, Overseer of Scouts, (3) Estate Manager Djari, who says :

I am a great 'provider'<sup>1</sup> for the homeland<sup>2</sup> in a year of (4) distress<sup>3</sup>. I have nourished one I knew not like one I knew. I have done what the great love and (5) the humble praise, in order that my life might endure on (6) earth and (in) the necropolis.

I went out of my house, I went down into my tomb (7) and there never was a fault of mine.

*Before the woman's face* : The Sole Royal Ornament, Priestess of Hathor, Sent-Mentu (*Snt-Mntw*).

### Notes

1) The word *mnk*, determined by man-with-hand-to-mouth, is obscure. Polotsky, Zu den Inschriften, p. 52, proposed "*mnk(3)*, Fürsorger", from the root *nk3*, "think about". I had

thought of *mn'*, "nurse, nourisher", but that would be a major emendation. It may be best to allow an unknown word *mnk*, meaning "provider". — 2. On *pr.sn*, "home", see Gunn, JEA 36 (1950) 111f. — 3. The term *snb-ib*, which in the First Intermediate Period came to be used euphemistically for "hunger", was studied with other terms for famine and want by Vandier, La famine.

## 18. Stela of the Steward Rediu-Khnum

From his tomb at Dendera (UE 6)

Cairo 20543

Reign of Wahankh Intef II

Petrie, Denderah, pp. 51-53, pls. xv & xvb; Lange-Schäfer, Grabsteine II, 164-167. Schenkel, MHT, no. 81, pp. 112-115; Schenkel in Arnold, Gräber, 57f.

A tall rectangular limestone stela, 152 x 62 cm., of good quality but now very worn. The inscription in twenty-three lines covers most of the surface. In the lower left corner Rediu-Khnum is seated before an offering array, holding an ointment jar to his face. Four servants attend to him.

(1) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to)<sup>1</sup> Osiris, lord of Busiris, Khentamenthes, lord of Abydos in [all his places : a voice-offering of 1000 bread, beer, beef, fowl] (2) alabaster [clothing], 1000 of everything good, for the Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, Favorite (*imy-ib*) of his great mistress, calm of step in -----.

(3) One who knows his station, is firm of seal, good of ...,<sup>2</sup>  
efficient in performance at every task,

dignified, open-handed, pleasant mannered,

(4) white-robed, handsome, godly to behold<sup>3</sup>.

One who knows the rule of conduct,

level-hearted, comrade of officials,

open-hearted, (5) forthright,

friendly to the pleader, that he may tell his wish.

His lady's confidant (*'q-ib*) whom she favors (*n st-ib.s*)

whom she placed in the great estate;

(6) a person (*qd*) spoken of with love,

one front-ranked in the Great House,

the honored Steward Rediu-Khnum (*Rdi(w)-hnmw*) who says :

I am one beloved of his mistress,

(7) her praised one in the course of each day.

I have spent a long period of years under my mistress, the Royal Ornament Nefrukayet (*Nfrw-k3yt*),

one great (8) in her *ka*'s, foremost in her ranks,  
great in forebears, foremost in mothers,  
for whose forebears the sky was raised up,  
foremost noblewoman of this land,  
(9) foremost nobility of Upper Egypt,  
being a king's daughter and a king's beloved wife,  
and having inherited from all her mothers.<sup>4</sup>

She has resettled Upper Egypt, (10) the van of men<sup>5</sup>, from Elephantine to the Aphroditopolite nome<sup>6</sup>, with women together with<sup>7</sup> estate managers and officials from the whole land.

I grew up under the feet of her majesty since (11) my earliest youth<sup>8</sup>. Thus she knew the excellence of my performance (*iqr st-.i*) and my fidelity (*mdd-mjn*) to the officials. Then she placed me at Dendera in her mother's (12) great cattle farm, rich in records, a foremost enterprise, the greatest estate of Upper Egypt.

I have spent a long time there, a span of many years, without there being a fault (13) of mine, for my competence was great. I reorganized it so that its management was made better than it had been before. I restored what I found decayed; I repaired what I found broken; (14) I replenished what I found lacking. I did not neglect any feast that I found celebrated on this estate. Sacrifice was secured for all daily offerings. Every feast was performed on its day, for the benefit of my mistress Nefrukayet (15) for ever.

I managed the estate successfully. I enlarged all its departments. I gave a gift to him who begged it. I nourished one I knew not like one I knew, so that (16) my name might be good in the mouth of the earth-borne.

I am truly an official of great heart, a sweet lovable plant<sup>9</sup>. I was no drunkard; I was not forgetful; I was not sluggish at my task. (17) It was my heart that furthered my rank; it was my character that kept me in front<sup>10</sup>.

I did all this that I did<sup>11</sup> while being the favorite of his mistress, and being keen I created wealth. (18) I furnished all the services by which an estate is managed, so as to extend support to what I found fallen. Lo, one says : "It is very useful that a man do what he deems useful for his mistress who furthers (19) his monument"<sup>12</sup>. I made for her a great pile of all kinds of riches, made in addition to what I had found done by all who had been in this position. I surpassed every peer of mine who had been in charge in this estate.

I am one who knows himself (20) as foremost of men, a costly timber made by god, who was given skill in his planning, and great excellence in his performing. My lady is Mistress of Upper Egypt, the highest of the Two Lands, the greatest of this land ! May her *ka* endure (21) upon the throne ! May she pass a million years in life like Re everlasting !

A voice-offering for the honored Rediu-Khnum on the *Wag*-feast, the *Thoth*-feast, the *hddt*-feast, the *Sokar*-feast, the *Flame*-feast, (22) the *New Year's* feast, the *Great* feast, the *Great Procession*, and all feasts :



May a hand be extended to him with offerings that have come before Hathor<sup>13</sup>;

May the foremost of the sanctuary (*pr-wr*) transfigure him, and the priests (23) of the august terrace (*rwd šps*);

May he open the ways he wishes in peace, in peace, the honored Rediu-Khnum who says :

I am one who made his reputation (*ir qd.f*),  
one beloved of people in the course of each day<sup>14</sup>.

### Notes

1) Gardiner's interpretation of the offering formula (Gr., Excursus B and Tomb of Amenemhet, 79ff.), which has been followed here, was challenged by Barta, *Opferformel*. Gardiner's explanation has now been fortified by G. Lapp, *Die Opferformel des Alten Reiches*, Mainz 1986 (DAI Abtlg. Kairo, Sonderschrift 21). It is still not clear just when the Middle Kingdom form became established. The likely time seems to be the reign of Wahankh Intef II : see the offering formulae of Qemnen and Nakhty (Nos. 23 & 26) where *di.f* appears after "Anubis", and *di.sn* after "all the gods of the necropolis". — 2) The meaning of *nfr 'bb* is obscure, and its recurrence on Stela No. 48 (p. 112 with n. 9) does not help much. — 3) The long sequence of self-lauding epithets is composed with care and organized in groups. The six epithets beginning with "dignified" (*nb šfyt*) and ending with "godly to behold" (*nfr(y) r m33*) form a unit, which describes the official's physical appearance and bearing. The opening of the sequence, "One who knows" (*rh*), is repeated as opening of the second sequence, which describes the man's inner nature. The third sequence, "His lady's confidant..." outlines Rediu-Khnum's special and close relationship to his mistress, the Queen. The whole forms an appendix to his titulary and hence is phrased in the third person. Only at its end does his name appear and, thereafter, the switch to first-person speech. In the speech three themes are interwoven : the encomium of his mistress; the narration of his career in her service; and the full self-presentation. The thread that runs through all three themes is the concept of reciprocity, see below, n. 12. — 4) The special feature of the formal encomium is the stress on the ancientness of the queen's nobility. Note also that in the phrase, "for whose forebears the sky was raised up", '*hyt*', "raised up", is the passive participle, as was pointed out by Polotsky, *Transpositions*, 11(3). On the historical implications of the encomium see below, n. 14. — 5) The term *h3t rmt*, "van of men", here an epithet of Upper Egypt, was applied to himself by the nomarch Ankhtifi (see pp. 25f.). — 6. For the boundaries of the Theban kingdom see below, n. 14. — 7) As often, the preposition *m-* here means "together with". The meaning of the whole sentence is that the queen, having inherited extensive lands in southern Upper Egypt, promoted the welfare of the Theban kingdom by an active settlement policy which involved bringing in women as well as managerial personnel. — 8) Read : *hpr.n(i) hr rdwy hmt.s dr nhnwt.(i) nt tp-'wy*, and compare : *iw di.n wi hm.f r rdwyfy m nhnwt.i* on the stela of Semti, BM 574.2-3 (= No. 41 p. 96) and also BM 101 (= No. 56, p. 123 B.2). — 9) Note the metaphor, *hn bni n mrwt*, and the similar, *ht šps*, "costly timber", in 1. 20.

— 10) This is a perceptive distinction between the dynamic "heart" that plans and drives forward, and the steadfast "character" that maintains what has been gained. — 11) That is the meaning of *ir.n.(i) nn mi-qd ir.n.(i)*. Compare Pepiankh's *ir.n.(i) 'h'w nb ir.n.(i)* (p. 20, n. 2) and also *ir.n.(i) nn mi-qd*, on Berlin stela 13272.11 = TPPI, no. 31, p. 45. It makes no difference whether one takes *mi-qd* to be the Old Kingdom "in the manner of", or Middle Kingdom "entirely". In any case, the focus is on the clause that follows. — 12) Rediu-Khnum quotes a "saying": *iw 3h wrt irr s 3ht n ib.f n nbt.f shntt mnw.f*. (The photograph shows that *shntt*, not *hntt*, is written). For *3h n ib*, and related expressions, denoting that something or someone is "deemed beneficial", see pp. 51, n. 8, 54, n. 11 & 77, n. 5. The saying is a variant on the timeless *do ut des*, and is here designed to sum up the reciprocal nature of Rediu-Khnum's relationship to the Queen: he is her tireless and devoted servant, and she advances him and "further his monument". The loyalty theme of the royal official, which was so prominent in the autobiographies of Old Kingdom officials, here returns in a changed version: what is now stressed is reciprocal loyalty. And that implies a large gain in selfhood and personal pride, a gain which the kingless First Intermediate time had fostered, and which the return of kingship did not weaken. — 13) Here begins a sequence of three afterlife wishes, which belong to the nascent "Abydos Formula", discussed in the next chapter. Having built his tomb at Dendera, Rediu-Khnum addresses his after-life wishes to the priesthood of Hathor of Dendera, who are called "priests of the august terrace". *Rwd*, "terrace" is here spelled with stair and house determinatives. The rendering in Ward, Index, no. 672, is mistaken. — 14. Historical implications. Since Rediu-Khnum does not name the reigning king, the identity of Queen Nefrukayet has occasioned much inconclusive discussion. Moreover, Rediu-Khnum's own place in the chronology of the period remained vague. Yet there is a clue in his definition of the Theban kingdom as embracing nomes 1-10, from Elephantine to Aphroditopolis, for this definition echoes the claim made by Wahankh Intef II on the Cairo stela of Djari and on his own tomb stela, Cairo 20512, composed in the 50th and final year of his reign (see p. 41 with n. 4). By contrast, the stela of Tjetji (BM 614, our No. 19) gives the boundaries of the Theban kingdom as nomes 1-8. Since this inscription was composed in the reign of Intef III, and the more modest definition of boundaries has anyhow the better claim to veracity, it follows that the advance into the 10th nome was a short-lived event, and one that occurred in the last years of Intef II. That means that Rediu-Khnum was a close contemporary of Djari, with both holding office in the second half of the reign of Intef II. The remark by Hayes (CAH I/2, 477) that the discrepancy in the boundary definitions "is probably one of expression rather than of fact, for it will be recalled that on the westside of the river the Thinite and Aphroditopolite Nomes share a common boundary", has weak feet (see Helck, Gaue, 94f., and Intef-iqer's definition of the boundaries of the Thinite nome: Leiden V 3 = our No. 30, p. 74 with n. 3). As for Gomaà's attempt (Zwischenzeit, 152) to underpin Theban rule of nomes 1-10 by the inscription of the nomarch Khety II of Siut, tomb 4, it founders on the rock of Edel's new translation (Siut, 178ff.). Now if Rediu-Khnum and Djari held office under King Intef II during the second half of the king's reign, the Queen Nefrukayet whom Rediu-Khnum served can hardly have been any other than Queen Nefru, the wife of Intef II and mother of Intef III. The earlier Nefru, the mother of Intef II, is then no longer a candidate for this equation, being too remote in time. Using a different line of

reasoning, Schenkel had made the same tentative identification (in Arnold, Gräber, 57). This second Queen Nefru is known from the stela of Tjetji (BM 614, 1.13) and now also from a broken lintel inscription in the sanctuary of Heqaib on Elephantine, bearing a dedication by King Intef III, the beginning of which reads : *Hr Nht Nb-tp-nfr nswt-bit s3-R' Ini-it.f '3 ms Nfrw* (Habachi, The Sanctuary of Heqaib, p. 111 & pl. 190).

## 19. Stela of the Chief Treasurer Tjetji

From his Theban Tomb  
British Museum 614  
Reigns of Intef II and III

PM I<sup>2</sup> 596. HT I, 49-52; Blackman, JEA 17 (1931) 55-61, pl. viii; TPPI, no. 20, pp. 15-17. Schenkel, MHT, no. 75, pp. 103-107; Lichtheim, AEL I, 90-93.

An outstanding piece in the collection of the British Museum, the stela is a tall limestone rectangle, 152 cm. high, of first-rate workmanship. The inscription fills the upper half in fourteen lines and continues in five columns on the lower right. Tjetji stands on the lower left, facing an array of offerings. In its careful relief work and elaborate language, the stela is an excellent representative of the Theban court style nearing its peak. On its similarities with the stela of REDIU-KHNUM see below.

*Horizontally, 14 lines*

(1) Horus *Wahankh*, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Son of Re,  
*Intef*, born of Nefru, living forever like Re :  
His true servant whom he favors (*n st-ib.f*)<sup>1</sup>  
one front-ranked in the house of his lord;  
an official great of heart,  
who knows the heart's wish of his lord;  
who follows him in all his strides,  
truly alone (2) in his majesty's heart.  
Head of the grantees of the king's house,  
foremost sealer in the secret place,  
which his lord hides from the grantees.  
Who gladdens the heart of Horus with what he desires,  
favorite (*imy-ib*) of his lord, his beloved,  
chief of the treasure in (3) the secret place his lord loves,  
the Chief Treasurer, the Royal Chamberlain (*mr sd3wt bry tp nswt*)  
the honored Tjetji who says : I am one beloved of his lord,  
his praised one in the course of each day.

I have spent a long period of years under the majesty of my lord Horus *Wahankh*, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, (4) Son of Re *Intef*, while this land was under his care (*st-hr.f*) south to Elephantine, north to Thinis in the Thinite nome, I being his personal servant, his chamberlain in very truth.

He made me great; he advanced my rank; he took me into (5) his confidence (*st hrt-ib.f*) in his palace of privacy (*w'w*). The treasure was in my hand under my seal, being the choicest of every good thing brought to the majesty of my lord from Upper Egypt, from Lower Egypt; being everything that gladdens the heart as tribute of this entire land, through fear of him throughout (6) this land; and what was brought to the majesty of my lord by the chiefs who rule the Red Land, through fear of him throughout the foreign lands. He gave these things to me, knowing the excellence of my performance (*iqr st-.i*). I accounted for them to him without there ever being (7) a fault of mine deserving punishment, because my competence was great.

I was indeed his majesty's true favorite (*imy-ib*), an official great in heart, cool in temper in his lord's house, who bent the arm among the grandees. I did not strive after (8) wickedness (*bw-dwy*) for which men are hated. I am one who loves good, hates evil, a person (*qd*) beloved in his lord's house, who did everything exactly as my lord wished.

As for any task which he ordered me to attend to, (9) be it presenting the case of a petitioner, be it attending to the plea of a needy man, I did it rightly. I did not neglect the accounting he required of me. I did not put one thing in the place of another. I was not high-tempered in consequence of (10) my power. I did not take property wrongfully in order to perform a task.

As for any royal department that the majesty of my lord entrusted to me, and for which he made me carry out a commission according to his *ka*'s desire, I did it for him. I improved all their procedures, and there never was (11) a fault of mine, because my competence was great.

I built a barge for the city and a boat for all service : the accounting with the magnates, and every occasion of escorting or sending. I am wealthy, I am great, having equipped myself (12) from my own property, which the majesty of my lord had given me because he loved me greatly : Horus *Wahankh*, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Son of Re, *Intef*, living forever like Re, until he went in peace to his horizon.

Then, when his son had acceded to his place, (13) Horus *Nakht Neb-tep-nefer*, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Son of Re, *Intef*, born of Nefru, living forever like Re, I followed him to all his good places of heart's delight, and he never rebuked me for anything because my competence was great. He gave me every task (14) that had been mine in the time of his father to pursue it under his majesty, and no mishap occurred in it. I spent all my time on earth as personal chamberlain of the king and was wealthy and great under his majesty. I am one who made his reputation (*qd*), one praised by his lord in the course of each day.

*Offering Formula*

(cols. 1-2)

(1) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris, lord of Busiris, Khentamenthes, lord of Abydos, in all his places : a voice-offering of 1000 bread and beer, 1000 beef and fowl, 1000 alabasters and clothing, 1000 of everything good and pure; the offering-array; the funerary meal; (2) the foods of the lord of Abydos, the pure bread of the house of Montu; libations and food-offerings of which the spirits love to eat, for the Chief Treasurer, the Royal Chamberlain, the honored Tjetji.

*Afterlife Wishes<sup>(\*)</sup>*

(cols. 3-5)

- 1 (3) May he cross the firmament (*bi3*), traverse the sky (*hrt*),
- 2 Ascend to the great god,
- 3 Land in peace in the good west.
- 4 May the desert open him her arms,
- 5 May the west give her hands to him.
- 6 May he reach (4) the council of the gods,
- 7 May "welcome in peace" be said to him by the great of Abydos.
- 8 May hands be given him in the *neshmet* bark on the ways of the west,
- 9 May he go (*hꜥ.f*) in good peace to the lightland (5) to where Osiris is.
- 10 May he open the ways he wishes to the gates in the sacred land,
- 11 May the supplied-ones give him their hands on the ground that gives offerings,
- 12 May his *ka* be with him, his offerings before him, the honored Tjetji.

**Notes**

1) As a rule, the biographical inscriptions on stelae begin with a version of the offering formula. Tjetji, however, starts with the titulary of the king whose devoted servant he was and then launches into his self-laudation. The new opening was favored by high officials of the later 11th dynasty; but to begin with the offering formula remained the more common practice. - Equally innovating is the length of Tjetji's introductory self-laudation; it is twice as long as that of Rediu-Khnum, who supplies an earlier example of this new fashion. Both self-laudations have the identical conclusion, consisting of the official's titles and name followed by, "who says, I am one beloved of his lord (lady), his (her) praised one in the course of each day." - Furthermore, both officials begin their narration with, "I have spent a long period of years under..." followed by the name of the king (queen) and by a definition of the Theban kingdom in terms of its boundaries. (The discrepancy in the two definitions was discussed above, p. 45). Observe now that Rediu-Khnum defined the borders objectively from south to north, whereas Tjetji viewed them dynastically as it were, from the Theban center, by saying, "south to ... north to..." - Historically, the First Intermediate Period is

(\*) The Afterlife Wishes, here numbered 1-12, are discussed in Chapter IV.

said to have ended with the reunification of Egypt by Mentuhotep II. Culturally it ended half a century sooner, when kingship returned forcefully to the South in the person of Wahankh Intef II and nurtured a new excellence in art work and marked advances in literary style. Both Rediu-Khnum and Tjetji are outstanding examples of the new literary style in autobiography. - In both texts the official's relationship to the king (queen) is the leitmotif. And the point made is that the servant's loyalty was matched by the master's trust. To describe this relationship meant portraying the perfect civil servant in his full competence and high standing. And that required marshalling the resources of the language so as to characterize the outer and the inner man. Here the epithet, compounded of adjective-verbs and nouns, proved useful; and when its versatility had been realized it became the favorite device. This went hand in hand with the growing preference of nominal sentences over verbal ones. Where Pepinakht had said, "My lord filled his heart with me" (p. 16) the 11th dynasty official described himself as the king's "confidant" (*'q-ib*) who had his lord's "trust and favor" (*imy-ib, n st-ib.f*). - Compounded nouns denoting character traits first appeared in the 6th dynasty. We have encountered *rs(w)-tp*, "vigilance", (p. 16, n. 4, and see Edell, Untersuchungen, pp. 53ff.); and compounded epithets are used – sparingly – throughout the First Intermediate Period, e.g. *mnḥ-qd*, "well-disposed" (p. 24) and *'q3-bi3t*, "straight-natured" (p. 29). The 11th dynasty autobiographies developed the full potential of the epithet; and while laudatory ones predominate, negative traits are also explored. Rediu-Khnum is, among other things, "dignified" (*nb-šfyt*), "pleasant-mannered" (*m3r-inm*) and "competent" (*rḥ-ḥt*), and he was never "forgetful" (*mhi-ib*). - Rediu-Khnum and Tjetji share several of these epithets, but Tjetji goes further in abstract terminology : the land was under the "care" (*st-ḥr*) of the king, while Tjetji enjoyed his lord's "confidence" (*st ḥrt-ib*) and attended to him in "privacy" (*w"w*). Like many gentlemen before him Tjetji "loved good and hated evil" (*ink mr.f nfrt msd.f ḏwt*) but he also said with newer eloquence that he "did not strive after wickedness" (*n wd.n.i m-s3 bw-ḏwt*).

## 20. Stela of Intef Son of Tjefi

From Thebes  
Metropolitan Museum 57.95  
Reign of Nebhepetre Mentuhotep II

PM I<sup>2</sup> 810. Fischer, *Artibus Asiae* 22 (1959) 240ff. & photo; Fischer, *JNES* 19 (1960) 258-268, figs. 1-2, pl. vii. Schenkel, MHT, no. 380, pp. 236-238.

A limestone tablet, 78 x 142 cm., of excellent quality. Intef and his wife are seated on the lower left, facing a heaped offering table and two rows of attendants bearing offerings. Above, and before them on the right, is the main inscription in seven lines. Four more lines of text, forming part of the main inscription, are written on the raised border that frames the tablet on all four sides. This surrounding band of writing was reckoned by Fischer to constitute the first four lines of the text, and was accordingly numbered 1-4,

with the central seven lines being numbered 5-11. But when so taken, lines "3-4", the bottom and right side of the border, are, in terms of content, out of place. Nor did I adopt Schenkel's arrangement in which "line 3", bottom of border, was divided in two halves numbered "3a" and "3b" and inserted in two different places of the text. I have placed lines "3-4" at the very end, numbered "10-11". There they form the proper conclusion, with the four lines of the frame enclosing the text in a circular movement : top - left side - bottom - right side.

*Border, top & left, lines 1-2*

(1) Horus *Sema-tawy*, Two Ladies *Sema-tawy*, Golden Horus *Qa-shuty*, King of Upper and Lower Egypt *Neb-hepet-Re*, Son of Re *Mentuhotep*, living forever like Re :

His true servant whom he favors (*n st-ib.f*)<sup>1</sup>,  
the Overseer of the fortress of the great doorway<sup>2</sup>,  
Trusty (*mh-ib*) of the king in ['every matter']<sup>3</sup>.

My lord had placed me in the nome of Heracleopolis as (2) ['Overseer of the fortress in'] it and Great Leader (*sšm(w) wr*) on behalf of the king himself.

Treasure-house of earliest time by gift of the king<sup>4</sup>,  
his confidant, a knower of things, a wise one<sup>5</sup>;

*On the Tablet, lines 3-9*

(3) one with whom no mistake happened since I acceded to doing a task. I was then in the middle of youth, when the king puts a man in his office, when a man accedes to the place of his father.

One who acts as door for what is and is not (*ntt iwt*)<sup>6</sup>,  
one foremost in functions in the royal domain,

(4) of oldest lineage from the time of the forebears.

Favorite (*imy-ib*) of the king in his palace,  
in keeping commoners distant from him,  
to whom grandees come bowing at the portals of the palace.  
Chief of the staff, head of officials, one whom grandees greet,  
who precedes the courtiers (5) approaching the palace,  
who knows ['what is secret'] on the day courtiers speak,  
Incense-laden, dignified, on the day the poor may enter.

Who reports to the king in privacy (*w'w*),  
whose seat is near (him) on the day of assembly (*s'š3*),  
to whom the king reveals his word to be a gateway for it,  
(6) a true one ['in his stead'] without transgression.

I am the sole one of his lord,  
one free of evil who puts a matter rightly,  
who knows speech, chooses words,  
sees far, plans ahead,  
knows his station in the king's house.

As for everything his majesty ordered (7) that I do for him, I did it as his majesty ordered it done. I did not put one thing in place of another. I did not neglect the need (8) of his majesty. I did not impair any project of his<sup>7</sup>.

My speech is excellent, my utterance forceful,  
all my actions are deemed effective by my lord<sup>8</sup>.

When I speak I am free (9) in speaking,  
my heart being filled with straightness for my lord.

I am his lord's truly beloved,  
his praised one whom he favors (*n st-ib.f*),  
the honored Intef, born of Tjefi.

*Border, bottom & right side  
lines 10-11*

(10) I am rich in my estate through what the majesty of my lord has given me. I came from my town, I descended from my nome, having done what people love and gods praise. I have given bread to the hungry, clothes to the naked – the honored Intef.

(11) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris, lord of Busiris : a voice-offering of bread, beer, beef, fowl to one honored by the great god, lord of heaven, Intef born of Tjefi.

#### Notes

1) The opening is the same as that on the stela of Tjetji, which we noted as an innovation of the 11th dynasty : the royal titulary followed by "his true servant whom he favors" (see above p. 46). — 2) *Mr hrt n r-3 wr*, I take to mean "overseer of the fortress of the great doorway", with "great doorway" meaning a mountain pass in the recently conquered Heracleopolitan territory. The reader should, however, study Fischer's argument that "great door" here has the sense of "great fortress" and *hrt* then means "prison". — 3) On the restoration of the lacuna see Fischer's discussion and Schenkel's alternate proposal. — 4) The epithet *pr-hd n p3wt tpt*, applied to a person, is extraordinary, though in keeping with the striving for rhetorical effects which is very noticeable in this text. — 5) The lacuna need not have contained more than the now missing two determinatives of *s33*, "wise man". — 6) Here and below in line 5 the official is defined as the "door" between the king and the people. On this "Mittlerrolle" see also Blumenthal, Königtum, p. 320, and Franke, SAK 11 (1984) 213. — 7) Compare the whole paragraph with the very similar one on Tjetji's stela, lines 8-10. — 8) Like *3h n ib* on the stela of Rediu-Khnum (p. 45, n. 12) *qn n ib* means "deemed effective", see below p. 54, n. 11 and p. 77, n. 5.



## 21. Quarry Inscription of the Steward Henu

In Wadi Hammamat  
Seankhkare Mentuhotep III, year 8

PM VII, 331. Couyat-Montet, Hammâmât, no. 114, pp. 81-84, pl. xxxi. Schenkel, MHT, no. 426, pp. 253-258. Hayes, JEA 35 (1949) 43, and Scepter I, 164; Kaplony, MDIK 25 (1969) 25-27; Seyfried, Beiträge, 243-245.

The text is inscribed on a rock face in sixteen lines and one column on the right edge (l. 17), the whole forming a horizontal rectangle of 150 cm. As was pointed out by Hayes, this Henu is almost certainly identical with the "great steward" Henenu of Theban Tomb 313, whose four fragmentary tomb stelae show him to have flourished in the reign of Mentuhotep II.

(1) Horus *Seankh-tawfyf*, Two Ladies, *Seankh-tawfyf*, Golden Horus *Sekhem*, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, *Seankhkare*, living forever like Re. (2) Year 8, first month of summer, day 3. (3) <His> true servant whom he favors (*n st-ib.f*)<sup>1</sup> who does all he praises in the course of each day, the Royal Seal-bearer, [Sole] Companion, Overseer of what is and is not<sup>2</sup>, Overseer of temples, Overseer of the granary and the two treasuries<sup>3</sup>, (4) Overseer of horn and hoof, Overseer of the six great houses :

Loud-voiced in invoking the king's name on the day of suppressing terror<sup>4</sup>.

Who judges the prisoner as he deserves without being partial to him.

Chief of lowlands, great one of highlands, who appeases the Two Lands for the king.

Greatly feared, much (5) beloved, to whom the whole land reports.

The eyes of his lord in very truth, there is no lie in it.

Feared by grandees and headmen for being close to his lord's person.

Outspoken on the day of fawning, who puts a word in its (right) place.

Who knows the nature (*sšm*) of what is and is not<sup>5</sup>, with nothing escaping him.

Who lights up the river at the head of (6) the troops, travels the land on every task, with nothing rejected by him.

He is in town while his rule is in the country, barley and emmer being counted.

One useful to his lord on the day of petitioning, who gives as is spoken<sup>6</sup>, so that 'what is planned comes to pass'<sup>7</sup>.

Who knows counsel in the circle of officials, who speaks with his lord in privacy, who knows the time for every project, who says (7) a word in its time<sup>8</sup>.

A man for all needs, a leader of men, without slip of the tongue on the feastday of the send-off, whose heart does not 'quail'<sup>9</sup>.

His lord's favorite (*imy-ib*) who does all that is spoken, while the whole land quakes in fear of his wrath, fear of whom is greater than of ... <sup>10</sup> in a year of pestilence.

One esteemed by this maker – one says, "His lord deems him useful"<sup>11</sup> – a potentate (8) in his presence<sup>12</sup>, he does not listen to the disloyal.

Who speaks and it happens<sup>13</sup>, peer of a god, more keensighted than Thoth.

Hapy flows under his fingers with every good thing; when he motions food is behind him; one who gives as he likes.

Trusty (*mḥ-ib*) of the king in the southern doorway<sup>14</sup>, Governor (*ḥry-sḥr*) of (9) the four southern nomes, Overseer of the treasury of gold, who is happy to ... ---.

Who singly does what is useful, who commands the business (*sšm*) carried out for the king, who judges without taking sides.

Storm that overwhelms the northern peoples, <to whom> the Two Lands come bowing, to whom every office reports : the Royal Treasurer the Sole Companion, (10) the Steward Henu (*sdṣwty-bity smr w'ty mr-pr Ḥnw*) who says :

[My lord] sent [me] to conduct seagoing ships to Punt, to bring him fresh myrrh from the chiefs ruling the Red Land, owing to the fear of him throughout the foreign lands. Then I set out from Coptos (11) on the way his majesty had commanded me, with me being an army of Upper Egypt from the *w3bw*-garrisons of the Theban nome, from Imyotru to Shabet. All royal offices from town and country were assembled and followed me, and four companies of police<sup>15</sup> cleared the way (12) before me, smiting any who rebelled against the king. Hunters, natives of the deserts, were employed as body-guards, and all his majesty's councillors were placed under my control (*st-ḥr*) to announce messengers to me, the sole commander whom millions obey.

Setting out with an army of 3000 men (13) I made the road into a river, the desert into a field border<sup>16</sup>. For I gave a water skin and a bread bag, with two *ḡs*-measures of water and twenty loaves, to every one of them every day. Donkeys were laden with sandals; when a foot became unshod another (sandal) was ready.

I also made twelve wells on the valley floor<sup>17</sup> (14) and two wells in Idahet, one measuring twenty cubits, the other thirty. I made another in Yaheteb of 10 by 10 cubits at all water levels<sup>18</sup>. Then I reached the sea, and then I built this fleet. I loaded it<sup>19</sup> with everything when I had made for it a great sacrifice of cattle and (15) goats<sup>20</sup>.

When I had returned from the sea I had done what his majesty had commanded me, bringing for him all kinds of gifts that I had found on the shores of god's land<sup>21</sup>. I descended from Wag and Rahenu, bringing him precious stone blocks for temple statues. Never had their likes come down for kings of the residence<sup>22</sup>. Never (16) had the like been done by any King's

Friend sent out since the time of the god.

I did these things for the majesty of my lord because he loved me much, as one who acts forcefully, who is watchful of his service for his lord, one whom his offices advanced, one whose place was advanced in his house above the officials of this land. (17) May even more than this be done for me by the power of my lord who made me !<sup>23</sup> May his *ka* long endure in the Horus Kingdom of the Two Shores ! I am his favorite servant (*n st-ib.f*) who does all he praises in the course of each day.

### Notes

1) Except for the addition of the regnal year – appropriate to an expedition report – the opening is the same as that of Tjetji and Intef son of Tjefi. — 2) The phrase "what is and is not" (*ntt iwt*), meaning "everything", becomes common at this time in epithets denoting a person's comprehensive knowledge and understanding. We have seen that Intef son of Tjefi called himself "a door for what is and is not". — 3) So, rather than Ward's "Overseer of the Double Granary of the Treasury" (Index, no. 387). — 4) The self-laudation that begins here is more extended and ornate than the earlier ones. Observe the unusual length of the sentences, many of which consist of three or four parts. By their length and cumulation they achieve a sweeping rhythm. — 5) See note 2. — 6) *Qdt*, here and in line 7, means "what the king has commanded". — 7) Even when emending *sh*tt to *sh*rt, the rendering of *m sh*rt *hp*rt is uncertain. — 8) Observe how the four sentences are formed into a group by repetition of the key terms : *rh* -- *mdw* -- *rh* -- *qd*. — 9) Whatever the verb *q3q3* may mean, the whole sentence describes the dignified bearing of the leader at the time when the expedition receives a formal send-off. — 10. An unidentified disease, read *stt* ? Cf. the *wst* disease mentioned in P. Anastasi IV 13.6-7 (Gardiner, LEM, p. 49). — 11. On *3h sw m ib n nb.f* see p. 45, n. 12, p. 51, n. 8. — 12) Though the king is "his maker", the great official is a "potentate" (*sh*m-*ir.f*) even in the royal presence. — 13) The terseness of *qd hp*r can not be imitated. — 14) This "southern doorway" is probably the traditional one of Elephantine. — 15) The reading *s3-prw*, "policemen" is owed to Yoyotte, RdE 9 (1952) 146. — 16. The striking metaphor was repeated in the somewhat later inscription Hammamat 113.12. — 17) I follow Couyat-Montet in taking *b3t* (with plant determinative) to signify the valley bottom, which had enough moisture to support some vegetation. — 18) Whether one reads *sm3 n b'h* (Schenkel) or *wb3 n b'h* (Kaplony) the meaning is that the well was an even 10 by 10 cubits' square all the way to its bottom. — 19) The verb *sbi* here probably means "load" rather than "conduct". In any case, the "great leader" did not "send" his fleet and sat on the shore of the Red Sea, waiting for its return, but rather "conducted" it himself (*sbi* in line 10) as befitted his position. — 20) The "great sacrifice" (*'3bt wrt*) was of course designed to feed the crew during the voyage, as was pointed out by Kaplony, *loc. cit.* — 21) If proof were needed, this sentence indicates that Henu led the fleet. That he did not describe Punt is the usual practice. No other expedition leader described Punt, or Nubia, or Sinai. — 22) The former Memphite kings are meant. — 23) This sentence, along with the preceding one, was explained by Kaplony, *loc. cit.*

#### IV. UNDER THE ELEVENTH DYNASTY, II : THE "ABYDOS FORMULA"

The stela of Tjetji (No. 19) ends with a sequence of twelve afterlife wishes. While the first five wishes derive from a pre-Osirian Old Kingdom core, as formulated during the 6th dynasty, the other seven pray for an afterlife in the following of Osiris and thereby reflect the rise to prominence of the cult and worship of Osiris, which is occurring at this very time, the reign of Wahankh Intef II.

Clusters of afterlife wishes with an Osirian orientation, now appearing in tomb inscriptions and on sarcophagi, are often called "Abydos Formula" without further explanation. It seems that Kees initiated the term in his *Totenglauben* (1926) where he cited the prayer of Tjetji and commented on it :

*"... ihm werden die Hände in der Neschetbarke gereicht auf den Wegen des Westens, er gehe in Frieden nach Abydos zum Orte, wo Osiris weilt, er öffne die Wege, die er wünscht, ...*

*Dies schlichte Denkmal eines hohen Beamten aus der Zeit des dritten Antef ... vermittelt gut die Hauptzüge des osirianischen Totenglaubens in der oberägyptischen Fassung, wie sie Abydos propagiert. Das Kernstück ist die Wanderung des Toten nach Abydos zur Stätte des Osiris : sein Gebiet, wo ihn die Grossen von Abydos begrüßen, erscheint als seliges Land, wie bisher Heliopolis ..." (p. 340).*

On the next page Kees cited a second example of such wishes, this one from a 12th dynasty stela :

*"Das kommt noch charakteristischer in einer weitverbreiteten abydenischen Totenformel zum Ausdruck, die man ruhig einem Beispiel der 12. Dynastie, der Stele des Gaufürsten und Prophetenvorstehers des Min von Panopolis-Achmim Antef entnehmen kann." (p. 341).*

Here then appears the term "abydenische Totenformel", and it is used again on p. 345. In the second revised edition of his *Totenglauben* (1956) Kees gave essentially the same account with one noteworthy alteration : the second mention of "abydenische Totenformel", the one on p. 345, was eliminated, probably because the stela in question is said to have come from Akhmim. (In the new format of the second edition the relevant pages begin at p. 230).

It must now be pointed out that in both editions Kees's citation of, and comment on, the Tjetji stela prayer contain two inaccuracies. In translating the Osirian wishes he had rendered : "er gehe in Frieden nach Abydos zum Orte,

wo Osiris weilt", where the text in fact has, "may he go in good peace *to the horizon (3ḥt)* to where Osiris is". And before citing the text he had spoken of the rise of Abydos to being the foremost cult center of Osiris, where people now erected their memorials : "Die wichtigsten Zeugnisse des Zeitglaubens bilden die Formeln der zahllosen Denksteine, die fromme Ägypter an der heiligen Stätte aufstellten." He thereby implied that, like so many others, the stela of Tjetji had stood at Abydos, when in fact it had come from Tjetji's Theban tomb. (The account by Budge of his finding of Tjetji's stela, in his *By Nile and Tigris*, II, 363, is worth reading).

Yet though the earliest known example of the so-called "Abydos Formula", had come from Thebes, and though it did not express the dead man's wish to "go to Abydos", the term "Abydos Formula" took hold. In *Zu den Inschriften der 11. Dynastie* (1929, p. 64) Polotsky distinguished the 11th dynasty version of the "Abydosformel" from that of the 12th dynasty, referring for the later version to an article by Maspero in *Bibliothèque Egyptologique*, I, 1-18. Maspero's article, however, though dealing with the best example of the 12th dynasty "Abydosformel" (Louvre stela C 3) was a general lecture on funerary beliefs in which he did not identify a specifically Abydene formula.

In H.W. Müller's *Totendenksteine des Mittleren Reiches* (1933) the "Abydosformel" is treated as an integral part of the textual program of Middle Kingdom Abydene stelae, whose core is the new idea of

*"Aufnahme des Verstorbenen in das Reich des Osiris. Die seit dem Mittleren Reich auf den Denksteinen ... in Erscheinung tretenden Elemente, wie die Huldigungsformel vor Osiris ... und Gebete, welche die Teilnahme an den in Abydos aufgeführten Mysterienspielen gewährleisten sollen (im folgenden kurz 'Abydosformel' genannt) sind durch die Aufstellung dieser Denksteine in Abydos bedingt."* (p. 192).

Thus, what had originated in a slip-up by Kees was now affirmed : Prayers for an Osirian hereafter, and related elements like the "Adoration Formula" ('Huldigungsformel') were proof that the stelae had been erected at Abydos. Subsequent references to the "Abydos Formula" were increasingly vague, e.g. *Drioton-Vandier, L'Egypte*<sup>4</sup> (1962, p. 246) :

*"La coutume de se faire ériger une stèle dans le sanctuaire d'Osiris prit une grande extension. Les stèles de cette époque sont généralement d'un beau style, et contiennent une longue formule qui décrit le bon accueil réservé au mort dans l'autre monde. C'est ce qu'on appelle la formule abydénienne."*

The reaction came with Barta's *Aufbau und Bedeutung der altägyptischen Opferformel* (1968). His detailed study of the offering formula included the growing and ever changing corpus of afterlife wishes, which envisioned the deceased's transfigured state. By joining these wishes to the requests for material offerings of the offering formula proper, Barta obtained a list of over three hundred funerary wishes, which he presented in two forms : divided by

period, and listed in an overall count. Useful as the scheme is, it has the drawback of isolating the individual wishes. Clusters of afterlife wishes, which formed integrated units at certain times, were broken up. The existence of clusters was admitted, but they were viewed as insignificant, and the term "Abydosformel" was dismissed :

*"Im allgemeinen handelt es sich um ein loses Aneinanderreihen von Einzelwünschen und nur gelegentlich ... können engere Bindungen, die aus einer inhaltlichen Zusammengehörigkeit resultieren, beobachtet werden. Auch Lokaltraditionen lassen mitunter während einer bestimmten Zeitspanne zusammenhängende Textgruppen entstehen, die sich jedoch sowohl wegen ihrer wechselnden Zusammensetzung als auch wegen ihrer örtlich keineswegs begrenzten Anwendung einer eindeutigen Fixierung entziehen. Bezeichnungen wie Abydosformel oder thebanische Formel sollten deshalb nur mit Vorsicht gewählt werden."* (pp. 296-7)

Though the cautioning is valid, the summary does not do justice to the vitality of those "local traditions" that created integrated groups of afterlife wishes. But since they are not really a part of the offering formula, it is just as well to study these groups separately in their own right. In any case, Barta's strictures may have promoted the realization that the "Abydos Formula" ought to be studied. In his recent translation of Louvre stela C 3, Vernus remarked :

*"A partir d'ici commence la formule abydénienne, voir Kees, Totenglaube, p. 231 seq.; Yoyotte, Les pèlerinages dans l'Egypte ancienne (SO 3) 35-6. J.J. Clère prépare une étude sur cette formule." (RdE 25, 1973, 226-7, n. 1).*

Alas, such a study by Clère has not appeared.

In his important work on the theology of Middle Kingdom Abydene stelae, Die Götter von Abydos (1974) Spiegel operates with the Abydos formula of the 12th dynasty ("jüngere Abydosformel") as an established literary form whose varied applications shed light on Abydene ritual and piety (pp. 13, 28f., 118, 120ff.). What, then, does the term "Abydos Formula" signify, and is its use justified ?

The stelae of Tjetji, Henenu, Qemnen, and Intef (Nos. 19 and 22-24) furnish the principal examples of Osirian afterlife wishes, as recorded on private tomb stelae of the Eleventh Dynasty. The stela of Tjetji came from his Theban tomb, and that of Henenu is probably from a Theban tomb. The two others, Qemnen and Intef, have no recorded provenience.

With twelve and seventeen sentences, respectively, Tjetji and Henenu have the longest sequences of afterlife wishes, and comparison of the two shows the consistent growth of Osirian motifs. The first five wishes of Tjetji's sequence derive from the Old Kingdom core of pre-Osirian afterlife wishes, as recorded in private tombs of the 6th dynasty, where the tomb owner prayed for safe arrival in the necropolis of the western desert. In Tjetji's version, the arrival in the west has been enlarged so as to embrace earth and sky; and the celestial component of the afterlife is glimpsed more distinctly in the seven wishes that form the second part of his sequence.

Henenu's series marks the further ascendancy of Osirian wishes. The first part again presents the (reinterpreted) Old Kingdom core, except that his

wish No. 4 is an Osirian infiltration. Wishes 8-17 are predominantly Osirian. Like Tjetji, Henenu envisages a reception at Abydos, phrased in a single sentence: "May 'welcome in peace' be said to him by the great of Abydos." The most conspicuous element of the new orientation is the wish to reach the celestial regions where both Re and Osiris dwell, and to be admitted to their divine barks.

The shorter versions of Qemnen and Intef lack the Old Kingdom core and have an entirely Osirian orientation; each also has two specific references to the Abydene locale. Intef's series, moreover, includes a distinct vision of the divine judgment awaiting the dead.

Like that of Tjetji, the stela of Meru (No. 25) had stood in a Theban tomb. Unlike Tjetji and the other three, Meru does not dwell on celestial things but concentrates on a lengthy appeal to the Abydene personnel of Osiris and Wepwawet – whose worshipper he is (adoration text) – asking to be granted an ample share in the offerings given to the dead on the various festivals, as celebrated at Abydos. Speaking from his Theban tomb, he is thus spiritually present at Abydos, as a hopeful follower of Osiris and Wepwawet and recipient of their bounty.

In sum, an evolving and distinctive corpus of Osirian afterlife wishes appears in longer or shorter forms on stelae of 11th dynasty officials. No harm is done if, for the sake of brevity, one calls this corpus "The Older Abydos Formula", as long as it is understood that it was a still evolving programmatic and ritual collection of utterances, rather than a formula. And it must be emphasized that some of its earliest paradigms and variations were recorded in Theban tombs. Neither a round-topped shape, nor the presence of Osirian wishes, prove that a stela came from Abydos. The corpus attained its definitive length, shape, and variations during the 12th dynasty, when the worship of Osiris at Abydos reached its peak. This "Later Abydos Formula" is studied in Chapter V.

### (19.) The Afterlife Wishes of Tjetji

The twelve afterlife wishes with which the stela of Tjetji terminates (see p. 48) follow after the offering formula but are not an integral part of it, being syntactically independent. The first five requests derive from the Old Kingdom repertoire of afterlife wishes, as formulated in private tomb inscriptions of the 6th dynasty. But there is one major change. Whereas in the 6th dynasty, the wish "to cross the *bi3*" had meant no more than reaching the tomb in the desert necropolis (that, at any rate, is the now prevailing scholarly opinion) the 11th dynasty formulation envisaged an ascent to the sky, such as the Pyramid Texts had spelled out for the benefit of kings only. The new view is the fruit of the general "democratisation" of funerary beliefs and aspirations that grew up in the Time of Autonomy. That *bi3* now meant "firmament, sky", is proven by its being matched with *hrt*, "sky".

The seven wishes of the second part are new formulations voicing the new Osirian orientation. The dead man wishes to reach the "council of gods", an allusion to the judgment of the dead, and to arrive in the "lightland" (*3ht*)

the region where Osiris dwells. He desires to be welcomed by "the great of Abydos", and to be admitted to the god's sacred bark, the *neshmet* bark.

The sequence of twelve wishes is (as far as I know) the earliest known major example of an integrated series of afterlife wishes with an Osirian orientation, recorded on private stelae of the 11th dynasty. It had been preceded by the short series of afterlife wishes which Rediu-Khnum had addressed to the priesthood of Hathor of Dendera, an earlier sounding of the theme, but not yet directed to the god who was soon to become *the* king of all the dead.

## 22. Stela of Henenu

From Thebes  
Moscow 4071  
Reign of Mentuhotep II

New excellent edition : Hodjash-Berlev, Pushkin Museum, no. 26, pp. 67-73. Schenkel, MHT, no. 495, pp. 290f.

An upright rectangular limestone stela, 119 x 78 cm., of outstanding quality. Its owner, Henenu, is almost certainly identical with the Great Steward Henenu of Deir el-Bahri tomb TT 313, which contained fragments of four stelae of exceptional quality (see Hayes, JEA 35, 1949, 43-49) and probably identical with the expedition leader Henu of Hammamat 114 (our No. 21). The almost perfectly preserved Moscow stela, acquired in Luxor by Golenischev, has an entirely funerary text and no titulary; these are clear indications that it was one of several correlated tomb stelae.

The upper half of the surface is filled by the main text in eleven lines of excellently carved hieroglyphs. In the lower half, Henenu and his wife are seated on the left before an offering table and an offering array whose items are individually depicted and named (not translated here). At the bottom are a libation formula and a short offering formula addressed to Anubis.

The main text consists of an elaborate offering formula and a sequence of seventeen Osirian afterlife wishes. This is the longest series of such wishes known to me from stelae of the 11th dynasty. Several of the wishes are identical with those of Tjetji's series, some are variants, and several are new additions to the growing repertoire. As on the stela of Tjetji, the sequence is syntactically independent of the offering formula, though logically connected to the person named at the end of the offering formula.

### *Offering Formula* (lines 1-3)

(1) An Offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris, lord of Busiris, Khentamenthes, lord of Abydos, in all his places : a voice-offering of 1000 bread and beer, 1000 beef and fowl, 1000 alabasters and clothing, (2) 1000 of all good things :

the pure bread of the house of Montu,



the funerary meal in the house of Osiris<sup>1</sup>,  
*dsrt*-beer and food offering, bread-ration and beer-offering,  
 foods (3) of the lord of Abydos,  
 milk of the two red cows that comes before the great god,  
 1000 of god's offerings to every god,  
 of which the spirits love to eat,  
 for the honored Henenu.

*Afterlife Wishes<sup>2</sup>*  
 (lines 4-10)

- 1 (1) (4) May he cross the firmament (*bi3*), traverse the sky (*hrt*),
- 2 (2) Ascend to the great god,
- 3 (3) Land in peace in the good west, as one honored by Osiris<sup>3</sup>.
- 4 (9) (5) May he travel (*sd3.f*) to the western lightland, to where Osiris is<sup>4</sup>,
- 5 (4) May the desert open him her arms,
- 6 (5) May the west give her hands to him<sup>5</sup>.
- 7(10) May he open the ways he wishes in peace, in peace,
- 8 (6) May he tread (*dndn.f*) the paths of the necropolis with the  
 followers of Osiris.
- 9 May the west open him her door,
- 10 May Hapy bring him<sup>6</sup> his offering.
- 11 May he eat with his mouth, (7) see with his eyes,
- 12 Know himself among the spirits.
- 13(8) May hands be given him in the *neshmet*-bark on the ways of the west,
- 14(7) (8) May "welcome in peace" be said to him by the great of Abydos<sup>7</sup>.
- 15 May he ply (*dsr.f*) the oars in the night-bark,
- 16 May he land (9) in the day-bark,
- 17 May the great ones tell him "travel in peace to Re in the sky."  
 The honored one (10) whose name is good, the beloved of his brother,  
 praised of his father in the course of each day, Henenu, born of Sent.

*Heading above the Offering Array*

(11) The funerary meal served on the monthly feast, the half-monthly feast, and all feasts, to the *ka* of the honored Henenu and his beloved wife, the Sole Royal Ornament, Sent.

Notes

1) The juxtaposition of the Theban Montu with the Abydene Osiris also occurred in almost identical terms in the Offering Formula of Tjetji. It hints at the Theban location and Theban allegiance of the two officials. — 2) In numbering the seventeen wishes, I have added in parentheses the corresponding numbers of Tjetji's afterlife wishes. — 3) The cluster of three wishes is identical with Tjetji's except for the addition of *m im3hw hr Wsir*. — 4) A variant on Tjetji's wish no. 9. — 5) Identical with Tjetji's nos. 4-5. — 6. One expects *in n.f H'py*, but *int n.f H'py* is written. — 7) There is a tendency to pairing and grouping of wishes, but their order is not firmly established.

### 23. Stela of the Priest Qemnen

Provenience Unrecorded

Turin 1517

Late 11th Dynasty

Maspero, RT 3 (1882) 117f.; Piehl, *Inscriptions I*, LxxxiiiA. Through the kindness of A. Roccati I obtained an excellent photograph.

A handsome round-topped limestone stela in a style that suggests a late 11th dynasty date. The elegant relief work has close affinities with other late 11th dynasty stelae, e.g. the Moscow stela of Henenu (our No. 22). The adoption of the rounded top presented a problem of organisation, here solved by having the inscription start in the top of the lunette. It fills the upper third of the surface in nine lines. The last three lines were shortened so as to block out a small rectangular space on the right side; this was filled with the standing figures of three female relatives. In the central register, Qemnen and his wife stand on the left, facing a row of four sons. In the bottom register, the couple is seated on the left before an offering table, the man raising an ointment jar to his face, the woman holding a lotus flower on a very long straight stem.

Lines 1-6 consist of a long offering formula; the shorter lines 7-9 contain afterlife wishes. Again, as on the stelae of Tjetji and Henenu, the afterlife wishes are independent of the offering formula.

#### *Offering Formula*

(1) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris, lord of Busiris, Khentamenthes, (2) lord of Abydos. May Anubis give<sup>1</sup>, he upon his mountain, *imy-wt*, lord of the necropolis, a voice-offering of 1000 bread and beer, 1000 beef and fowl, 1000 alabasters and clothing, 1000 of everything<sup>2</sup> (3) good and pure : bread ration, beer offering, *dsrt*-beer; oxen for slaughter, incense on the flame; fowl, food-offerings, (4) choice cuts; milk of the *hs3t*-cow poured out on the great altar; offerings for the temple heaped on the august (5) table<sup>3</sup> before Khentamenthes, on all feasts of the house of Osiris, of which the spirits love to eat, for one honored before (6) the great god, lord of heaven, the excellent noble, great on earth, whose spirit is equipped for the necropolis, the honored priest Qemnen, whose good name is Wepwawet-nakht, justified.

#### *Afterlife Wishes*

- 1 (1) (7) May he cross the firmament (*bi3*), traverse the sky (*pt*)<sup>4</sup>,
- 2 (3) Land in the western lightland (*3ht imnti*),
- 3 (2) Ascend to the great god.
- 4 May he go up and down (8) with the followers,  
the lords of offerings in Abydos.
- 5 (8) May hands be given him in the *neshmet*-bark,
- 6 (7) May (9) "welcome in peace" be said to him by the great of Abydos, the  
honored priest Qemnen with good name Wepwawet-nakht, justified.

### Notes

1) Note the appearance of the form *di Inpw*, signifying that the god is the giver, and see p. 44, n. 1. — 2) The book roll is written without protruding strings. — 3) Note the many alliterations, which help to define the clauses. — 4) Again using Tjetji as basis, one can see how the six wishes of Qemnen bring variations and additions.

## 24. Stela of the Troop Commander Intef

Provenience Unrecorded  
Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek Inv. 963  
Late 11th Dynasty

Piehl, RT 1 (1879) 133f.; Schmidt, Mus. Münt., pp. 13-15, pl. xvi; Koefoed-Petersen, Stèles, pl. 9, and Recueil, no. 963, pp. 47f. Clère, BIFAO 30 (1931) 425-447; Schenkel, MHT, no. 499, pp. 298f.

A round-topped limestone stela, 163 x 115 cm., of good quality but eroded by salt. The lunette is filled by an Adoration Text in three lines. In the central section Intef is seated on the left, facing an offering table and his own figure, standing on the right with arms raised in adoration. Below the scene is the main text in seven lines, consisting of an offering formula and a sequence of five afterlife wishes.

### Adoration Text

(1) Kissing the ground to Khentamenthes; seeing the beauty of Wepwawet. (2) Going (*sd3t*) with the great god in all his strides (*nmtt.f*) by the honored Troop Commander (3) in the whole land, Intef, justified.

### Offering Formula

(1) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris, lord of Busiris, Khentamenthes, lord of Abydos, in all his places : a voice-offering of 1000 bread and beer, 1000 (2) beef and fowl, 1000 alabasters and clothing, 1000 of everything good and pure : bread ration, beer offering, foods of the lord of Abydos (3) after his *ka* has been satisfied therewith, for the honored royal Seal-bearer and Troop Commander in the whole land (*mr-mš' m t3 r dr-f*) Intef, justified.

### Afterlife Wishes

- 1 May he be transfigured (4) by the great of Busiris (and) the entourage of the lord of Abydos.<sup>1</sup>
- 2(11) May the supplied-ones give him their hands on the (5) ground that gives offerings.<sup>2</sup>
- 3(7) May "welcome in peace" be said to him by the great of Abydos.
- 4(6) May he reach the divine council (6) at the place where the gods are.
- 5(12) May his *ka* be with him, his offerings before him, his voice be found true at the reckoning of the surplus (*ḥsb '3w*) :

"Tell your fault (7) and it shall be removed for you from all you have told",<sup>3</sup> for the honored Royal Seal-bearer, the truly beloved of his lord, his praised one whom he favors, the Troop Commander Intef, justified.

#### Notes

1) Though four out of Intef's five afterlife wishes are present on Tjetji's stela (nos. 11, 7, 6, 12) the overall tenor of Intef's hopes is a different one: the Old Kingdom core has disappeared and the orientation is entirely Osirian. The first wish, "May he be transfigured..." (literally, "May transfigure him", *s3ḥ sw*) and the third one, "May 'welcome in peace' ..." are regularly present in the 12th dynasty versions of the "Abydos Formula". — 2) The "ground that gives offerings" figures prominently in the afterlife wishes of Abydene stelae, as we shall see (p. 88). — 3) The wish to reach the divine tribunal – and pass its judgment – here receives an unusual elaboration, amounting to a depiction of the procedure by which judgment would be rendered. The passage was explained by Clère, *loc. cit.*

## 25. Stela of the Overseer of the Treasury Meru

From Thebes (TT 240)

Turin 1447

Nebhepetre Mentuhotep II, year 46

PM I<sup>2</sup> 331. Klebs, *Reliefs MR*, p. 22, fig. 14 (photo); Turin Museum postcard. Schenkel, *MHT*, no. 387, p. 240.

A round-topped limestone stela crowded with figures and texts, arranged in five registers: 1. Lunette: Regnal date, seated figure of Meru, and text in extraordinary arrangement (see note 1). 2. Main text in nine lines. 3. Meru standing on the right, his father Iku and another man standing on the left, all with arms raised in prayer and facing a central text in three columns. 4. Meru and his mother seated on the left before an offering table. 5. A row of offering bearers.

#### Lunette

Year 46. O priests, priestesses, songsters, songstresses, musicians male and female, 'servant and master'<sup>1</sup> of Thinite Abydos! It is a good name that you recall on the monthly feast, the half-monthly feast, on the *Wag*-feast, and on every feast of Abydos, since there occurred the good beginning when Montu gave the Two Lands to King Nebhepetre, ever living!<sup>2</sup>

*Before seated figure of Meru*: Honored before the great god, lord of Abydos, the Overseer of the treasury (*mr-sd3wt*) Meru.

#### Main Text

(Second register, 9 lines)

(1) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris Khentamenthes, lord of Abydos: a voice-offering of bread and beer, beef and fowl for him in Thinite Abydos, and in every place where the god (2) is served<sup>3</sup>, namely the one

beloved of the king, the Overseer of the Treasury Meru; he says :

O you who are alive on earth,

(3) and shall be in the following of Khentamenthes and Wepwawet,

who love life, who hate death (*hpt*),

(4) priests of the great god, all priests of Abydos !

As you wish to have honor before Osiris,

(5) make a voice-offering and libation

of what bread and beer may be in your hand,

while you say, "1000 of bread, 1000 of beer,

(6) 1000 of beef, 1000 of fowl,

1000 of alabasters, 1000 of clothing,

1000 of everything good of what Osiris Khentamenthes gives

(7) to the Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, Overseer of the Treasury Meru." If there is nothing in your hand, say it with your mouth (8) in whatever place you are, in the following of this god ! For I am one beloved of people, one pleasant (9) to his servants. I have given bread to the hungry, clothes to the naked, in order to be honored before the great god.

#### Adoration Text

(Third register, 3 cols.)

(1) The Overseer of the Treasury, his lord's favorite (*n st-ib nb.f*) Meru, justified, (2) as he gives praise to Osiris, kisses the ground to (3) Khentamenthes and Wepwawet, the honored Meru.

#### Notes

1) The method of filling the lunette space of round-topped stelae still being in the experimental stage, the scribe and sculptor here produced an odd solution. The regnal year forms the top line. Centered below it is the vocative *i*, all alone. Below it are five lines that fill the space neatly but by an unusual arrangement : the determinatives of "priests, priestesses", etc. are grouped in a double row below their respective words. Toward the end of the double line, however, the space seems to have been insufficient; hence it is not clear how the last four signs are to be read; they are the hieroglyph *hrd* with one seated-man determinative behind it, and below it, *nb* with one seated-man behind it. — 2) *Hpr.n tp-w3t nfrt m rdit Mngw t3wy*, etc. was rendered by Gardiner, MDIK 14, 50, "there came a good start when Mont gave the Two Lands", etc. (So also Gardiner, Gr. § 301). Schenkel objected that this could not be fitted into the context. It seems to me, however, that *hpr.n* fits and gives a good sense if one takes it to be the relative past (Gardiner, Gr. § 412.2). — 3) Taking '*h't*' to be '*h'tw*'.

## V. MIDDLE KINGDOM STELAE FROM ABYDOS

### 1. DWELLERS IN THE THINITE NOME

The callous plundering of Abydos has destroyed so much evidence that an adequate reconstruction of the site is unattainable. But in recent years the work of assembling monuments torn from their contexts has made significant advances, notably by Simpson's pioneering book, *The Terrace of the Great God at Abydos*. The ongoing work of the Pennsylvania-Yale Expedition to Abydos is certain to produce important results concerning the Middle Kingdom temple and the adjoining "North Cemetery", lying to the southwest of the temple. An interesting preliminary account of the expedition's aims, and of its results for the seasons 1967-1983, is the article by David O'Connor, "The 'Cenotaphs' of the Middle Kingdom at Abydos" in the *Mélanges Mokhtar*, II, 161-177.

This chapter focuses on some major Abydene stelae and tries to advance the understanding of their themes and purposes. It also presents answers to some often raised points, notably the scope of "pilgrimage" to Abydos, and the identity of the "terrace of the great god".

Is the often made claim that in the Middle Kingdom every Egyptian strove to make at least once a pilgrimage to Abydos actually true?

As one studies the stelae, they fall quite naturally into three distinct categories: 1. Stelae from tombs built by citizens of the Thinite nome. 2. Stelae erected by royal officials who had come to Abydos or its vicinity on specified missions. 3. Stelae erected by "pilgrims", i.e. by persons who visited Abydos in order to attend the Osirian festivals and/or to set up memorials to themselves.

In the first category we have here six persons, four of whom were priests at Abydos, while two held administrative positions in the Thinite nome.

On the stela of **Nakhty** (No. 26) we meet a Thinite official who had built his tomb – a real tomb, not a cenotaph, as befitted a local citizen – at the "terrace of the august god". A full publication of this interesting 11th dynasty stela would be most welcome. The question, what was meant by the "terrace of the august/great god" will occupy us throughout this chapter.

The stela of **Mentuhotep** (No. 27) was actually found in a tomb at

Abydos. Its unusual text portrays a self-made man who became a successful cattle farmer and holder of a minor office in the Abydene priesthood.

The two stelae of **Rudjahau** (Nos. 28-29) also came from a real Abydene tomb. While he, too, had a hand in dairy-farming, his principal occupation was that of a "chief priest" of the Osiris temple, in which capacity he played a major role in the performance of the Osirian mysteries. All three men lived during the latter part of the 11th dynasty. The two men next to be considered flourished in the zenith of the Middle Kingdom – the reign of Sesostri I.

**Intef-iqer** (No. 30) informs posterity of his ancestral connection with the Thinite nome : the office of "scribe of fields" of the nome had been held by his family since the time of his grandfather. Like Nakhty (No. 26) Intef-iqer built his tomb "at the terrace of the august god", from which favored location he, too, hoped to follow the processions of Wepwawet.

Pride in ancient lineage, and high-flown language in which to proclaim it, reach a climax on the two stelae of the "chief priest" **Wepwawet-aa** (Nos. 31-32). His ancestors held office in the Abydene district since the time the land was settled. The tomb he built for himself among those of his forebears is his by ancestral right. In his career he even surpassed his ancestors, wherefore, by royal favor, his statues stand in the temple of Osiris. And as chief priest of Osiris, and weighty with rank and honors, he prays for a favored place in the otherworldly realm of the god.

Under king Khendjer of the 13th dynasty, it fell to a minor and modest priest of Osiris to renovate the decaying temple. The three stelae of **Amenysonb** (Nos. 33-35) bear eloquent witness to the rhythm of time : change, decay, restoration. In rank a mere "controller of a phyle", Amenysonb was summoned to the vizier's office at Thebes and put in charge of the renovation work. When the major work had been completed, he was rewarded first by the vizier and subsequently by the king. On this latter occasion he was commissioned to carry out additional renovations of the temple's interiors and furnishings, and in this connection he may have received a raise in rank in addition to being paid liberally. In any case, he was enabled to erect two handsome memorial stelae in the vicinity of the enclosure wall, on which he commemorated his achievement. They contrast with his much more modest tomb stela, found in Garstang's Cemetery E (see the plan in PM V. 38 reproduced here as Fig. 1). Here, then, we have a man who built his tomb in the northern cemetery area of Abydos at quite some distance of the Osiris temple and in addition erected two commemorative stelae in the immediate vicinity of the temple.

## 26. Stela of the Overseer of Cattle Nakhty

From Abydos, now at Chatsworth  
11th Dynasty

Müller, Totendenksteine, pp. 187f. & fig. 11. Müller's drawing is Clère's facsimile copy of the "Berliner Papierabdruck Nr. 610", called "Rom 3". Fischer, Dendera, p. 202, n. 802 tells that the stela is at Chatsworth, the seat of the Earl of Devonshire. Fischer's dating is : "probably as late as the reign of W3ḥ-*nḥ* Intef".

A round-topped stela crowded with figures and texts. In the lunette, the standing figure of Abihu (*'b-iḥw*), the father of Nakhty, faces a row of sons and daughters. The main text begins below the lunette, in three lines, and continues in one column each on the right and left edges of the stela. In the center, Nakhty and his wife are seated, facing an offering table and two sons who present offerings. In the bottom register, to the right and left of a bolted door, are the standing figures of Nakhty, framed by brief texts.

(1) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Wepwawet and all the gods of the necropolis, that they may give<sup>1</sup> a voice-offering of bread, beer, cool water, incense on the flame, and food offerings of beef, fowl, and loaves, to the Overseer of all cattle (*mr 'b nb*) of the whole Thinite nome, one more eminent than all his forebears; (2) who bends the arm among officials; the beloved of his town, its praised one, Nakhti-*iqer* (*Nḥt-iqr*)<sup>2</sup> born of the Sole Royal Ornament, Hathor-nebet-it (*Ḥt-Ḥr-nbt-it*). He says :

### *Consecration Text*

I made this tomb (*is pn*) at the terrace of (3) the august god,  
<in> the sacred land of the western horizon,  
on the ground that gives offerings –  
the arrival place of every god —<sup>3</sup>

so that I may be in the following of Wepwawet and receive the daily bread-and-beer that has gone up on the great altar – for the one honored before the great god, lord of heaven, Nakhty, justified.

(4) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Anubis upon his mountain, *imy-wt*, lord of the sacred land, he who is before the divine booth : a voice-offering of cool water and 1000 bread, beer, beef, fowl, alabaster, and clothing to the honored Nakhty, born of Nebet-it<sup>4</sup>.

(5) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris, lord of Busiris, Khentamenthes, lord of Abydos : a voice-offering of cool water to the honored Nakhty.

*Bottom, right : another offering formula, and the phrase :*

The honored Nakht as he goes in peace to the western horizon, of the house of Osiris.



*Bottom, left* : A voice-offering for the Overseer and Senior Scribe Nakhti-iqer. Going to the terrace of the necropolis (*rwd n bwt-ntr*), following the god in his strides, by Count Nakhty who does what Wepwawet favors.

#### Notes

1) On the offering formula of the Middle Kingdom see p. 44, n. 1. — 2) The name appears in three forms on this stela : Nakhty, Nakht, and Nakhti-iqer. On names enlarged by *iqer* see Fischer, Dendera, p. 131 & n. 576. — 3) It can be assumed that Nakhty, the "overseer of all cattle of the Thinite nome", was a dweller in the nome, and that his "tomb" (*is*) was a real tomb, not a cenotaph. Note that he built his tomb "at the terrace of the august god" (*r rd n ntr šps*). The meaning of this phrase, and of the whole Consecration Formula, will occupy us throughout this chapter. The need to supply the preposition "in" before "sacred land of the western horizon" (*t3 dsr 3 ht imntt*) will also be discussed. As for the expression "arrival place of every god" (*msprt nt ntr nb*), the term *msprt* is most unusual (cf. Wb. II, 148 = Petrie, Denderah, pl. 8C : *ink msprt nt t3 pn mi qdf*, and Fischer, Dendera, 140). In the 12th dynasty, the idea that Abydos was the "arrival place" — of gods and of the dead — was elaborated by calling it *msht*, "birthplace" (see Nos. 36, 48, 49). — 4) This is the shortened form of the mother's name, previously given as Hathor-nebet-it.

## 27. Stela of the Priest Mentuhotep

From Abydos  
Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum E 9.1922  
Late 11th Dynasty

PM V, 55. Petrie, *Tombs of the Courtiers*, pls. xvi, xxii-xxiii, pp. 10 (descr.) & 19 (Gardiner's transl.). Photograph by courtesy of the Fitzwilliam Museum and Miss J.D. Bourriau.

A well carved rectangular limestone tablet. The four-line inscription occupies the upper register. Below it on the left, two couples are seated before an offering table. They are Mentuhotep and his wife, and his parents. On the right, family members and servants, arranged in three registers, approach with offerings.

The names of the two couples are : 1. The Priest Mentuhotep (*Mntw-htp*) born of Hathor-emhat (*Ht-Hr-m-ḥ3t*). 2. His beloved wife, the honored Sent (*Snt*) born of Hepi (*Hpi*). 3. His truly beloved father, the honored seal-bearer of the god, Nefer-peret (*Nfr-prt*) born of Renes-ankh (*Rn.s-'nh*). 4. His beloved mother, the honored Hathor-emhat (*Ht-Hr-m-ḥ3t*) born of Bener-en-it (*Bnr-n-it*).

(1) O you living ones on earth,  
who shall pass by this tomb (*is pn*),  
who love life, who hate death (*hpt*),  
Say : May Osiris Khentamenthes transfigure Mentuhotep !

(2) I was the first of his troop,  
the foreman of his crew,  
one who found the word he was asked for,  
one who answered to the point.

(3) A cool one who got bread on time,  
whose conduct replaced him a mother at home,  
a father who said, "Take note, my son".

One well-disposed and taught by his nature,  
like a child grown up with a father,  
(4) but behold, I had become an orphan !<sup>1</sup>

I acquired cattle, I raised oxen,  
I developed my business in goats,  
I built a house, I dug a pond – the priest Mentuhotep.

### Notes

1) The terse self-presentation is very remarkable. It has five distinct units, which I read as stanzas of four and three lines. In the first stanza Mentuhotep addresses the living; the second sketches his accomplished persona. The third and fourth stanzas are most interesting : orphaned early, he was entirely guided and taught by his own good nature, which assumed the role of father and mother. Note the distinction between "nature" and "nurture", and how for him the two were one ! Here are stanzas 3-4 in transliteration :

*qb šsp t r tr.f*  
*idn.n nf šhr.f mwt m hnt*  
*it hr ir gm.k s3.i*

*nfr qd sb3.n bi3t.f*  
*mi hrd hpr m-' it*  
*iw sk.(w)i grt w3.kwi r nmh*

Note that *šhr* is clearly not "character", but rather "conduct", or "behavior", that which is usually formed by the example of father and mother. The notions of "disposition/nature" and "character", are conveyed by *qd* and *bi3t*. Note also that in *it hr ir gm.k*, *hr* is for *hr qd* (Gardiner, Gr. § 321) and *gm* has the sense of "understand".

## 28-29. Two Stelae of the Chief Priest Rudjahau

From Abydos  
Cairo 20514 and BM 159  
Late 11th Dynasty

The Cairo stela of Rudjahau came from Mariette's excavations at Abydos, and the find spot was described by him as "Nécropole du nord, zone du nord-est, contre le mur d'enceinte". To the same Rudjahau belongs the British Museum stela 159, which is said to have come from Abydos and to have been in the Salt collection. The two stelae had evidently stood together in an Abydene tomb – a real tomb, not a cenotaph, since Rudjahau informs posterity that he had been a top-ranking priest at Abydos, and a wealthy citizen there.

The location of the tomb – in that part of the "north cemetery" which abutted on the western enclosure wall of the Osiris temple complex – is significant. Being a chief priest of the temple, and building his tomb at a time when the area was not yet crowded, Rudjahau could choose a spot in close proximity to the sanctuary.

### 28. Cairo 20514

Lange-Schäfer, *Grabsteine* II, pp. 104f. and IV, pl. xxxv.2. Mariette, *Cat. d'Abyd.*, no. 742. Schenkel, MHT, no. 496, pp. 291f.

A small rectangular limestone stela, 60 x 53 cm., divided in three registers. The top register has the text in four lines. The wider middle one depicts Rudjahau and his wife Nefrut seated on the left, facing an offering table. On the right sits a second woman, "the honored Nebet-it", and behind her stand two children, "his beloved son Rudjahau", and "his daughter Idi". In the bottom register two cows are milked by the herdsmen Djadjay and Idi.

(1) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris, lord of Busiris, Khentamenthes. lord of Abydos, in all his places : a voice-offering of 1000 [bread and beer] (2) [1000 beef and] fowl, 1000 alabaster and clothing, 1000 of everything good : the pure loaves of Khentamenthes; the funerary meal in the house of Osiris; the cake [ration], (3) jugs of beer, milk, pure white loaves; what has been presented on the great altar, what has gone up before the great god – after his *ka* has been satisfied therewith – for the honored Chief (4) Priest and Chamberlain (*mr ḥm-nṯr imi-ḥnt*) a great one in the sacred land, a great priest in Thinite Abydos, a leader of the *ḥnmmt*-people on the day of joining the Two Lands<sup>1</sup>, Rudjahau (*Rwd-ḥ3w*) justified.

## Notes

1) Is this a festival celebrating the reunification of Egypt by Mentuhotep II, the same that was mentioned on the stela of Meru ? (p. 63 with n. 2).

## 29. BM 159

PM V, 95. HT I, 46-47; Faulkner, JEA 37 (1951) 47-52 & pl. vii. Schenkel, MHT, no. 497, pp. 292-295.

A tall round-topped limestone stela, 155 x 95 cm. The lunette is filled by an offering array and an attendant. Below it are three registers. In the upper one Rudjahau and his wife Idi<sup>1</sup> are seated on the left, receiving offerings from sons and servants. In the second register is a dairy-farming scene similar to that of the Cairo stela, and some of the same names reappear, including that of the cow Seh-nefer (*Sh-nfr*). The third register contains the inscription in twelve lines.

(1) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris, lord of Busiris, Khentamenthes, lord of Abydos, in all his places : a voice-offering of 1000 bread and beer, 1000 beef and fowl, 1000 alabasters and clothing, 1000 of everything (2) good : the pure loaves of Wepwawet; the funerary meal of Osiris; cakes, pure white loaves, jugs of milk, jars of beer; the food presentation (3) of the lord of Abydos, what has gone up before the great god – after his *ka* has been satisfied therewith – for the honored Chief Priest Rudjahau, justified, who says :

I am a knower of things, (4) one guided by Thoth,  
close-mouthed <on> temple secrets,  
who honors nobles above plebs,  
a Thoth in judging ['matters'].<sup>2</sup>

I am the like of Ptah, the second of Khnum,  
a great rebel slayer when the *sem*-priest proceeds,<sup>3</sup>  
front-ranked in the western lightland,<sup>4</sup>  
the like of (6) the Sole-among-them.<sup>5</sup>

I am Anubis, the keeper of starched linen,  
on the day of wrapping the poles,<sup>6</sup>  
swift-handed to hold back (7) the foes  
from the ground of offerings.<sup>7</sup>

Of discerning heart<sup>8</sup> a priest of Neith  
on the day of the 'attackers'.<sup>9</sup>

A mute one at the judges' decision  
(8) on the day the byssus is cut.

One praised by the Foremost-in-Hesret

when leading the 'poling',<sup>10</sup>  
the guide on the Horus (9) ways of the Netherworld  
on the day of setting up bouquets.  
One who gladdens his god with what he desires,  
adorns him with what his heart has conceived,  
contents the august nobles (10) with what went up before his lord,  
the honored Rudjahau, justified, who says :

I am a magnate who bends the arm,  
who knows his rank among the nobles.  
(11) I am a magnate in his town,  
a rich man in his house,  
a great pillar of his kin.<sup>11</sup>  
I am one who loves good, hates evil,  
with whom none stayed angry (12) overnight.  
No falsehood came from my mouth,  
no evil was done by my hands.  
I am one who made his repute (*qd*)  
whom people loved throughout each day.

#### Notes

1) On the Cairo stela the name of the wife is Nefrut. Rudjahau thus had two wives – successively or simultaneously – and a third woman, Nebet-it, is depicted on the Cairo stela. In JEA 60 (1974) 100-105, Simpson examined the question of polygamy on the basis of such Middle Kingdom stelae. — 2) An illegible word. — 3) The first of several references to ritual actions performed during the celebration of the Osiris mysteries in which Rudjahau took a leading part. — 4) Faulkner (note *f*) thought the "western horizon" here meant a religious establishment, perhaps the Tomb of Osiris, and Schenkel, too, suggested "ein Gebäude, o.a." My findings are summed up on p. 92, n. 8. — 5) "The Sole among them" can hardly be anyone other than Osiris. — 6) An unidentified ritual. — 7) Since the "ground of offerings" (*w'rt htp*) is a term for the sacred necropolis (see p. 88) I think that the "foes" in the ritual performance were not "apprehended" (*hnr*) in it, as Faulkner rendered, nor "imprisoned" in it (Schenkel) but rather "held back" from it. — 8) The meaning of *fnh-ib* is uncertain. Its other known occurrences (see Janssen, Autobiografie, I.x.1-4) suggest the mental quality of "discernment" or "insight". — 9) The *idhw* (from *dh*, Wb. IV, 484, "niederwerfen") seem to be the forces on the side of justice, who overthrow the Sethian rebels. — 10) *M m3' sm't*; Wb. IV, 130.12 knows only *sm'*, "ein Schiffsgerät". The "Foremost in Hesret" could be Thoth or Osiris (cf. Gardiner, AEO I, 51f.) either of whom might "praise" this priest of Osiris for what seems to be the steering of the god's bark, the action also mentioned on the stela of Ikhnofret, line 19 (No. 42, p. 99). — 11) On *bwit* see now Franke, Verwandschaft, 277ff.

### 30. STELA OF THE SCRIBE OF FIELDS INTEF-IQER

From Abydos  
Leiden V 3 = No. 3  
Sesostris I, year 33

PM V, 101. Piehl, *Inscriptions III*, xxiz-xxiii; Boeser, *Beschreibung II*, no. 3, pl. ii; Eg. Oudheid, no. 45, pp. 66f. (photo) & p. 161. Spiegel, *Götter*, pp. 130f.; Franke, *Verwandtschaft*, p. 56.

A handsome round-topped painted limestone stela, 143x80 cm., divided into six registers : 1. The inscription in eight lines. 2. Seated on the left before an offering table are the "scribe of the cadaster" Imeny (*Imny*) and his wife Imeni (*Imni*). Seated on the right are the "scribe of the cadaster" Imsu (*Imsw*) and his two wives, Mereret and Mut. 3. Seated on the left are the "scribe of fields" Intef-iqer (*Ini-it.f-iqr*) and his wife Keku (*Kkw*); they face an offering table and two sons and two daughters who approach with offerings and greetings. 4. Seated on the left are the "scribe of fields" Imeni (*Imni*) son of Hepu, and his wife Neni (*Nni*). 5-6. The two bottom registers are filled with standing relatives.

(1) Year 33 under the majesty of Kheperkare, living forever<sup>1</sup>. (2) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris, lord of Busiris, Khentamenthes, lord of Abydos; an offering-that-the-king-gives (to) (3) Anubis on his mountain, *imy-wt*, lord of the sacred land; that they may give a voice-offering of bread and beer, and 1000 beef and fowl to the Scribe of the Cadaster (*sš n tm3*) and Overseer of Fields in the Thinite nome of the South<sup>2</sup> (*mr 3 ḥwt m tp-rs t3-wr*) Imsu—south to (4) the Tentyrite nome, north to the Panopolite nome<sup>3</sup>.

There had served as scribe of the watered fields of Thinite Abydos my father and the father of my father since the time of Horus *Wahankh*, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, (5) Son of Re *Intef*<sup>4</sup>.

#### Consecration Text

Now I have come to this tomb (*iw.n.i grt r is pn*)  
at the terrace of the august god (*r rd n nṛ šps*)  
ground great of fame (*w'rt '3t ḥmhmt*)  
that I may see Wepwawet (*iḥ m3.i Wpw3wt*)  
in (6) all his feasts, in all his strides (*m ḥbw.f nbw m nmtwt.f nbt*)  
because I am one beloved of his lord,  
one efficient (*qn*) in his office.<sup>5</sup>

#### Offering Formulae

An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris, lord of Busiris, great god, lord of Abydos, (7) a voice-offering of bread and beer, and 1000 beef and fowl to the honored Scribe of the Cadaster and Overseer of Fields in the

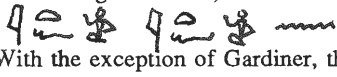
Thinite nome of the South, Imeny.

An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Anubis upon his mountain, that he may give a voice-offering of bread and beer, and 1000 beef and fowl to the honored Scribe of Fields, Imeny<sup>6</sup>.

#### *Dedication Formula*

It is (8) their beloved son who keeps their names alive, the honored Scribe of Fields in Thinite Abydos, Intef-iqer, born of Mut, justified and honored.

#### **Notes**

1) In the reign of Sesostri I it becomes a fairly common practice to begin the private biographical stela with a regnal year date. The stela of Meru (No. 25) provides an earlier example. Spiegel's surmise (Götter, 122) that the practice "soll wohl stets andeuten, dass der Stifter in offizieller Mission in Abydos war", is not borne out by the evidence. So far, the regnal year dates on the stelae of Meru and Intef-iqer merely suggest that these two tomb builders wished to record the date on which their stelae were erected. — 2) So, rather than the rendering by Ward, Index, no. 32, "Overseer of Fields in the Head of the South and the Thinite Nome". On *tp-rs*, see Gardiner, JEA 43 (1957) 6-9. That Imsu's official task was limited to the Thinite nome is borne out by the mention of the boundaries of the nome. — 3) That the Thinite, 8th, nome is said to border on the 6th and 9th nomes, suggests that at some point in the south the 8th and the 6th nomes were contiguous. — 4) The sentence reads: *iw grt ir.n sš 3hwt m mw nw T3-wr 3bdw*  *dr rk Hr W3 h-'nh nswt-bit s3 R' Intf*. With the exception of Gardiner, the scholars who dealt with this text have understood it to mean that Intef-iqer refers to three generations of ancestors, his great-grand-father, grand-father, and father, reading the signs as *it it n it.i*. But Gardiner, Gr. § 507.3 read: *it.i it n it.i*, and rendered, "there served as scribe of the fields ... my father and the father of my father", etc., and not "the father of the father of my father". The spelling can support either interpretation, but grammatically only Gardiner's rendering is correct; because in the alternate rendering, the "great-grand-father" is the sole subject of the verb *iri* and thus he alone is said to have been "scribe of the fields" "since" the time of Wahankh Intef, which is absurd. Note also that only two ancestors, the father Imsu and the grandfather Imeny, are the recipients of Intef-iqer's prayers for offerings, and only these two ancestors are depicted in the relief scenes. — 5) The outstanding role of Wepwawet, as reflected on Middle Kingdom Abydene stelae, was stressed by Spiegel, Götter (especially pp. 54ff. and pp. 130f.). Other aspects of the Consecration text, an earlier example of which occurred on the stela of Nakhty (No. 26) are discussed later on in this chapter. — 6) The offering formula on behalf of the grand-father Imeny matches the offering formula for the father Imsu with which the text began.

## 31-32. Two Stelae of the Chief Priest Wepwawet-aa

From Abydos  
Leiden V 4 and Munich GL.WAF 35  
Sesostris I — Amenemhet II

By their content the two stelae prove their Abydene origin. But as they lack a recorded provenience, the location of the tomb they came from cannot be determined. We note, however, that it was a real tomb, not a cenotaph, as befitted a "chief priest" of the Osiris temple. Differing in shape, size and dates, the two stelae had not been planned as a pair. Nevertheless, the later of the two, the Munich stela was, by its textual program, designed to complement the earlier one : on his Leiden stela Wepwawet-aa recites an ornate self-laudation, detailing his ancient nobility and high standing at court, and emphasizing his ancestral rights to an Abydene burial. The Munich stela adds a lengthy offering formula and a series of after-life wishes according to the text of the "Later Abydos Formula", and concludes by narrating the visit to the royal residence during which the office of "chief priest" was bestowed on him.

### 31. Leiden V 4 = No. 5

Piehl, *Inscriptions* III, xx-xxi; Boeser, *Beschreibung* II, No.5, pl. iv; Sethe, *Les.*, no. 15a, pp. 72f; Simpson, *Terrace*, ANOC 20.1, pl. 30. Spiegel, *Götter*, 84.

A rectangular painted limestone stela with cavetto cornice and torus molding, 160 x 105 cm. The upper third is filled by the inscription in thirteen lines. In the central register Wepwawet-aa and his wife are seated on the left before an offering table, facing family members and attendants arranged in three rows. In the bottom register Wepwawet-aa stands on the left, facing an offering table and two rows of offering bearers. On the damaged upper rim and sides of the cornice are the names and regnal dates of Sesostris I and Amenemhet II, the dates being "[year] 44" and "[year] 2".

The text consists of six units : Titulary. Consecration text. Career. Moral profile. Offering formula. Claim to front rank in the hereafter.

(1) The Prince, Count, Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, *Sem*-priest, Leader of all kilts, Keeper of Nekhen, Priest of Maat, Overseer of ...<sup>1</sup>, Great Priest of Osiris; Overseer of Linen in the Sanctuary<sup>2</sup>, front-ranked in the treasure chamber, privy to the secrets (2) of seeing alone, Great Chamberlain in Abydos<sup>3</sup>, master of silence in privacy, with gloved hand in the hidden places in seeing his lord's beauty; to whom is entrusted what is and is not<sup>4</sup>, for the worth of (3) his efficiency is recognized<sup>5</sup>; the



Prince, Count, Chief Priest Wepwawet-aa says :

*Consecration text*

As for this tomb (*is pn*) that I made in the desert of the sacred land,  
amidst the fathers who created my flesh,  
nobles of the first day,  
lords of monuments as elders of the office,  
(4) the first to govern Heket's shore since the time of Geb,  
I made it so as to make firm my place in their midst,  
(it being) my district also.<sup>6</sup>

I assumed office as a youth (5) and became priest at my time of discernment. I quickened the pace under royal command and partook of praises<sup>7</sup>. The king gave to me as to one who makes growth; I was born (6) as one who understands and acts. It was my heart that advanced my position and I conformed to the deeds of my fathers<sup>8</sup>. I truly became the king's beloved; my office was famed throughout the land, love of me in the sovereign's (7) body.

It was king Kheperkare who placed me among his companions, for his majesty deemed me worthy<sup>9</sup>. As into my father's house did I enter my house when I took my seat in the temple. (8) I fared north and south from the residence, knowing I would do more than was ordered.

I committed no crime against people —

a thing hateful to the god —

I buried the old ones of my town,

I nourished (9) the unnourished.

I am one silent among speakers,<sup>10</sup>

of whom is said, "await his coming",

whose heart conducts his affairs,

who is sent because deemed worthy.<sup>11</sup>

One whom the king honored (10) before the Two Lands,

his trusty (*mḥ-ib.f*) before his subjects;

one truly straight toward the people,

a noble who unties the knotty,

one loved of Tawer's gods.

An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris, lord of Busiris, great god, lord of Abydos :

May Anubis give (11) he on his mountain, *imy-wt*, lord of the necropolis;

May Heket give together with Khnum, the gods of the shore of Hu : may they give a voice-offering of bread and beer, 1000 beef and fowl, and 1000 linens on the First Procession, on the Great Procession, on the *Wag*-feast, on the Thoth-feast, on the Flame feast, on the First-of-the-year feast, and all great (12) feasts celebrated in this temple.

May Mehun extend his hand to him<sup>12</sup> at the head of the august nobles,

May Osiris advance my seat over the great ones in the necropolis,  
 for I am a man to whom one stretches out the hand !  
 I am the son of a noble, (13) a great one in Tawer !  
 A magnate in his house, one rich in his field,  
 rich in meat-offerings in the temple !  
 My fathers were lords since their ancestors,  
 sons and seed of primeval ones,  
 nobles of the first day !  
 The honored Count and Chief Priest Wepwawet-aa, man of honor.

### Notes

1) The reading of the title has not been established. — 2) *Pr-wr* is "shrine of Upper Egypt" or "sanctuary" in general. — 3) The *imy-hnt*, once a royal chamberlain, was now often a temple functionary (see Guilmot, CdE 39, 1964, 31-40). The stela of Semti the Younger (No. 41) suggests a connection between the two functions. — 4) On "what is and is not" see p. 54, n. 2. — 5) On this frequent use of *hr-ib* in the sense that something is "deemed" or "understood", see p. 45, n. 12; p. 51, n. 8, p. 54, n. 11, and p. 128, n. 2. It recurs twice more in this text. — 6) Sethe, *Les.* 72, took *sp3t.i grt* to be *sp3t.i gr.ty*; but "my district being silent", does not yield a good sense, whereas the unemended adverb *grt*, "also", conveys the speaker's assertion that, like his ancestors, he too was entitled to burial in the holy ground of Abydos. The construction invites study : is it a complete sentence ? — 7) The same two clichés, current at this time, are used by Intef son of Sent, BM 562, see p. 109 with n. 5. — 8) Rediu-Khnum had said, "It was my heart that advanced my position, it was my character that kept me in front" (see p. 45 with n. 10). Here, the same first sentence is employed with a different, suitable but less effective, complement. — 9) See n. 5. — 10) Lit. "among officials", *ink grw m-m srw*, with a deliberate rhyming effect. — 11) All three clichés recur in No. 45, the stela of Intef son of Sent, BM 572 (pp. 106ff). *S3w iwt.f* is "await his coming", rather than "beware of his coming", as its use on the stela of Semti the Younger, BM 574, makes clear (see p. 96, l. 8). That *s3w* often means "await", rather than "guard", was noted by Gardiner, JEA 43 (1957) 112f., also H. de Meulenaere, BIFAO 53 (1953) 106f. — 12) The wish that Mehun (god of sacrificial slaughter, represented by his priest) should extend his hand with offerings, is one of the wishes of the Abydos Formula. The scribe here failed to rephrase it from "to him" to "to me", as the sense required, for Wepwawet-aa now makes his final claim to favored treatment in the hereafter, commensurate with his eminence in life.

### 32. Munich GL.WAF 35

Spiegelberg et al., *Grabsteine II*, no. 3, pp. 2-7, pl. I; Sethe, *Les.*, no. 15b, pp. 73f.; München Kat. 1972, no. 35, pl. 21; Simpson, *Terrace*, ANOC 20.2, pl. 30. Spiegel, *Götter*, 99; Franke, *Personendaten*, Dossier 205. Barta

in Fs Fecht, 63-76 (metrical reading).

A handsome round-topped limestone stela, 136 x 70 cm. The inscription in twenty-five lines covers most of the surface. The last six lines are shorter, leaving space on the lower left for the relief figure of Wepwawet-aa who is seated before an offering table. The first line, in the lunette, contains the regnal date which is now damaged. The text consists of four distinct sections : 1. A long offering formula. 2. An "Appeal to the Living" which includes a list of the gods worshipped at Abydos. 3. A major portion of the "Later Abydos Formula". 4. Wepwawet-aa's account of his investiture with the chief priesthood and the benefits it brought him.

(1) Year ---<sup>1</sup> under the majesty of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt *Nebkaure*, given life forever. (2) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris, lord of Busiris, Khentamenthes great god, lord of Abydos, that he may give a voice-offering of bread, beer, beef, fowl, (3) alabaster, clothing, and everything good and pure : the bread-ration, the beer-offering; *qsrt*-beer, slaughtered oxen, incense on the flame; fowl, (4) food offerings and choice cuts; sweets and milk of the *hesat*-cow; what is libated on the great altar as offerings for the temple; what goes up (5) on the august altar before Khentamenthes on the *Wag*-feast, the Thoth feast, the *Haker*-feast, the First Procession, the great Procession, the New Year's feast, the River Journey of the god, the Flame feast (6) the First-of-the-year feast, the monthly feast, the half-monthly feast, the Sokar feast, the *s3d*-feast, the Procession of Min, the Vigil of Peqer<sup>2</sup>, the *tnwt*-feast, the five epagomenal days — being the feasts of Osiris on which (7) the spirits love to eat — for the *ka* of the Count and Chief Priest Wepwawet-aa; he says :

O counts, inspectors, priests, and chamberlains,  
say : 1000 bread, beer, beef, fowl, alabaster, and clothing  
for the temple of Re, Khentamenthes, and Wepwawet,  
and Shu, Tefnut, Thoth, Khnum,  
Sokar, Hemen (8) Geb, Nut,  
Min, Onuris, Amun, Ptah,  
Khemy, Horus, southern and northern,  
Wengyt, the Ennead, Neith and Heket,  
Hathor, Anubis, Isis, Nephthys, and Sebyt,<sup>3</sup>

for the *ka* of the Count and Chief Priest Wepwawet-aa, Great Chamberlain in Abydos (9) front-ranking in the temple, excelling in management in the house of his lord, sole pillar, teacher of conduct, who offers sacrifice in (10) the temple in the course of each day, the Chief Priest Wepwawet-aa.

*Afterlife Wishes*<sup>4</sup>

- 1 May hands be stretched to him with offerings from before the great god, after his *ka* has been satisfied therewith.
- 2 (11) May he be transfigured by the great of Busiris (and) the

- entourage in Abydos.
- 3 May he open the ways he wishes in peace, in peace.
  - 4 May those in Tawer exalt him, (12) the priests of the great god.
  - 5 May hands be given him in the *neshmet*-bark on the ways of the west.
  - 6 May he ply (*dsr.f*) the oars in the night-bark,
  - 7 May he sail in the day-bark.
  - 9 (13) May he travel (*sd3.f*) with the great god when the god fares to Ro-Pequer, the great *neshmet*-bark holding its course, on the feasts of the necropolis.
  - 10 May the Bull-of-the-west transfigure him (14) when he joins him at his oars.<sup>5</sup>
  - 11 May he hear jubilation from the mouth of Tawer at the *Haker*-feast on the night of vigil, the vigil of Horus-the fighter.<sup>6</sup>
  - 12 May he tread (*dndn.f*) the good ways (15) at the entrance of the western lightland — the Chief Priest Wepwawet-aa. He says :

When I had gone north to offer salutations at the great residence of his majesty, the seal-bearers who are in the palace (16) and the persons at the portal saw my being ushered into the palace, I being made to enter unannounced. An ox was slaughtered (17) for my meal; feet bestirred themselves for me. As one praised did I come forth from the palace, one beloved of the king's house. (18) For office had been conferred on me by the palace, namely that of Chief Priest and Great Chamberlain in Abydos. Every rank of mine had been advanced (19) over (those of) my fathers who had been before. His majesty granted me to slaughter oxen in the temple of (20) Osiris Khentamenthes in Thinite Abydos. (21) There accrued to me (income) from their hides because I was (22) so greatly favored by his majesty over every count who had been there (23) since its beginning. My statues (24) were placed in the temple as a follower of the great god. (25) Offerings were established for them, and their loaves were set down in writing.

#### Notes

1) The illegible year date is given as "13" in the München Kat. 1972, p. 48, and as "23 or 6" in Simpson, Terrace, p. 27. — 2) See below n. 6. — 3) With minor variations, the same list of gods appears on the stelae Louvre C 15 and Turin 107; the list is discussed by Spiegel, Götter, 99. — 4) Here follow eleven of the first twelve wishes of the "Abydos Formula" in the version of the 12th dynasty and in its standardized order. The full version is discussed in connection with Louvre stela C 3, (No. 36) see pp. 86ff. The omission of wish no. 8, "May 'welcome in peace' be said to him by the great of Abydos", may well have been deliberate, since Wepwawet-aa claimed to belong to the "greatest" of Abydos. Not that we can be sure who was meant by the term "great of Abydos". Spiegel, Götter, 122, assumed that the earliest kings were meant : "Die 'Grossen von Abydos' sind ja die

Bewohner des alten Königsfriedhofs, die als Vornehmste aller in Abydos versammelten Toten den engsten Kreis des Osiris bilden..." In any case, they seem to be distinct from the "entourage in Abydos", regularly mentioned in wish no. 2 in parallel with the "great of Busiris", in whom Spiegel, Götter, 142, saw "anonyme Gefolgsgötter des Osiris". — 5) The meaning of *hkn hn'f m hpwt.f* is uncertain; it recurs in Louvre C 3 as *hkn.n.f m hpwt.f*, in BM 573 as *hkn.k hn'f m hpwt.f*, and in BM 567 as *hkn.f hn'f m hpwt.f*. That suggests that in the first two examples *hkn* ought to be *hkn.f*, and that the action meant by *hkn* is one of "joining". — 6. The ceremony called *sdrt Pqr* or *sdryt Hr šn*, a most secret part of the Osiris Mysteries, is discussed below p. 88, n. 9 & p. 100, n. 4.

### 33-35. Three Stelae of the Priest Amenysnb

From Abydos  
Louvre C 12 & C 11 and Liverpool E. 30  
13th Dynasty

Deriving from the early plundering of Abydos, the two Louvre stelae are listed in PM V,46 in the section entitled "Finds from Temple of Osiris and in or near Enclosure". The Liverpool stela, however, came from Garstang's excavations at Abydos in 1907. As Kitchen reports in his publication, docketts on Garstang's photographs suggest that the stela was found in Tomb 303 or 305. Note that Garstang's "Cemetery E" (see plan in PM V, 38) is located at some distance from the Osiris temple enclosure, whereas the two Louvre stelae are said to have come from "in or near Enclosure". It means that the three stelae had not stood together, and this is borne out by the difference in quality between the well carved Louvre stelae and the more coarsely done relief work of the Liverpool stela : the latter had been made for Amenysnb's tomb, while the Louvre stelae were memorials designed for display in the immediate vicinity of the temple.

One can surmise that Amenysnb had built his tomb before he was given the task of cleansing and renovating the Osiris temple. In carrying out this task, and being amply rewarded, he had access to good craftsmen and the means to pay them. Thus he could commission two handsome memorials whose location within or near the temple enclosure assured a front seat to one who desired "to praise Wepwawet, lord of Abydos, at his procession".

Louvre C 12 and C 11 : PM V, 46. Sethe, Les., nos. 17a+b, pp. 76f.; Simpson, Terrace, ANOC 58.1-2, pl. 80 (numbers reversed); Helck, 2. Zwischenzeit, nos. 12-13, pp. 7-9 (numbers reversed).

### 33. Louvre C 12

A round-topped limestone stela, 107 x 54 cm. In the lunette, the standing figures of Osiris and Ptah face those of Wepwawet and Horus. Behind each pair is a standing jackal, representing the "northern" and the "southern" Wepwawet. Below the lunette is the inscription in seventeen lines, and in the lower left corner is the standing figure of Amenysnbn, carved in heavy relief.

(1) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris Khentamenthes, great god, lord of Abydos, that he may give a voice-offering of bread, milk, beef, fowl, spirithood and power (*3ḥ wsr*) (2) in the necropolis to the *ka* of the Controller of a Phyle (*mty n s3*) of Abydos, Amenysnbn, justified, begotten by Waemkau, born of the lady Nebet-it; (3) he says :

There came the scribe of the vizier, Sonb, the vizier's son, to summon me at the behest of (4) the vizier. I went with him and found the mayor of the city and vizier (5) Ankhu in his office<sup>1</sup>. Then the dignitary (*sr*) put a command before me, saying : (6) "It is herewith commanded that you cleanse this temple of Abydos. Craftsmen shall be given to you for the purpose, together with temple personnel (7) of these nomes and the warehouse of the god's estate."

Then I cleansed its house (8) by house, on top of its walls, outside and inside. The painters filled in with colored (9) shapes of plaster, renewing what had been made by (10) King *Kheperkare*, justified<sup>2</sup>.

Then the Protector of Egypt<sup>3</sup> (11) came to occupy his seat in this temple, (12) the deputy of the overseer of the treasury (*idmw n mr sḏ3wt*) Sa-Onuris (*S3-inḥrt*) following him. Then (13) he thanked me profusely, saying : "How fortunate is he who did this (14) for his god !" Then he gave me the sum of 10 deben, topped off (15) by dates and a side of veal. Then came the dignitary of...<sup>4</sup> (16) travelling north. These works were viewed (17) and one rejoiced over them exceedingly.

#### Notes

1) On the viziers bearing the name Ankhu see v. Beckerath, *Untersuchungen*, pp. 48 & 97ff. — 2) The factual and historically significant narration of Amenysnbn here furnishes major corroborating evidence for the fact that king Sesostri I was the principal builder of the Osiris temple in Abydos as it appeared in the Middle Kingdom. — 3) That the epithet *Khu-baq* (*ḥw-b3q*) designated the reigning king has been established by the publication of the Cairo stela known as the "stèle juridique" (P. Lacau, *Une stèle juridique de Karnak*, ASAE Suppl. Cahier no. 13, Cairo 1949, reprint 1984). It is there said that a document was brought to the office of the vizier in year 1 of *ḥw b3q 'nḥ wḏ3 snb*"; see Lacau's discussion, pp. 27ff. For *b3qt* as a Late Period term for Egypt see Wb. I, 425. In JEA 34 (1948) 33f., Gardiner had cited the sentence of the still unpublished stela and guessed the correct meaning, but his tentative translation "the Bright Protected one", which entered Faulkner's Dictionary, 186, should be abandoned. — 4. *Sr n* ... an unread term; with house

determinative, probably an office at Thebes. The official is travelling north and stopping off at Abydos. The whole account makes it clear that Amenysonb, a citizen of Abydos, was summoned to Thebes, where the vizier Ankhu gave him the commission to renovate the temple. By the logic of the narration, the *sr* who now came to inspect the completed renovation was the vizier.

### 34. Louvre C 11

Louvre C 11, which matches C 12 in size and style, is its sequel in time and content. Round-topped, of limestone, 106 x 58 cm., it has in the lunette the titulary of king Khendjer, forming line 1 of the nine-line text. In the lower half, four vertical text columns fill the middle space and are flanked on the left by the standing figure of Amenysonb, and on the right by that of Wepwawet.

(1) The Good God, Lord of the Two Lands, lord of action, King of Upper and Lower Egypt *Ny-m3'(t)-nt(?)*-*R'*<sup>1</sup>, given eternal life; the Son of Re, of his body, *Khendjer*, given eternal life, stability, and dominion.

(2) Command placed before the Controller of a Phyle of Abydos, Amenysonb, justified, saying : (3) "The works you have done have now been viewed. As the sovereign favors you, as his *ka* favors you, (4) spend your old age well in this temple of your god !" It was commanded (5) to give me the hind quarter of a calf; and it was commanded to instruct me, saying : "Carry out (6) all inspections of this temple."

I acted according to all that was commanded. (7) I carried out the renovation of every chapel of every god in this temple. Their altars (9) were made anew together with the great altar of juniper wood that is before (the god). I performed effectively for my god<sup>2</sup>, and the sovereign rewarded me.

#### *Offering Formula and Adoration Text*

*(Vertically)*

(1) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Wepwawet, lord of the sacred land<sup>3</sup>, that he may give sweet breath of (2) life to the *ka* of the Controller of a Phyle of Abydos, Amenysonb, justified, born of Nebet-it, justified.

(3) Praising Wepwawet, lord of Abydos, at his procession (4) by the Controller of a Phyle of Abydos, Amenysonb, justified, begotten by Waemkau.

#### Notes

1) This is the reading of the king's prenomens now adopted by von Beckerath, *Handbuch*, 69; see also his *Untersuchungen*, 49ff. — 2) Lit. "my heart being effective for my god (*ib.i 3h n nfr.ḏ*). — 3. On the increased eminence of Wepwawet, which included his replacing Anubis as god of the necropolis, see Spiegel, *Götter*, 49ff.

### 35. Liverpool E. 30

Kitchen, JEA 47 (1961) 10-18 and JEA 48 (1962) 159f. Franke, Personendaten, Dossier no. 125 (the three stelae).

A rectangular limestone stela, 51 x 35 cm., carved on both sides. The top right and bottom left corners are missing. The stela is dominated by a large *ankh* sign the loop of which has been cut clear through the thickness of the stone. On the recto, on either side of the *ankh* sign, is the standing figure of Amenysonb with arms raised in adoration. The upper half of the right-hand figure is now lost. Below are several seated relatives identified by their names; they include Amenysonb's mother, Nebet-it. Above and before Amenysonb's left-hand figure is the legend : "Fourfold praise of Wepwawet by the Controller of a Phyle of Abydos, Amenysonb, begotten by Waemkau." The verso consists entirely of domestic and agricultural scenes with legends.



## 2. OFFICIALS ON MISSION

Four of the six officials in this section came to Abydos to perform tasks there. Two stopped off at Abydos on returning from missions to other places in Upper Egypt. These two, then, were not only envoys but also pilgrims of sorts, to whom applies Yoyotte's apt definition : *L'Egyptien passa en pèlerinage beaucoup plus souvent qu'il n'alla en pèlerinage.*" (*Pèlerinages*, p. 24).

The two stelae of **Mery** (Louvre C 3 and C 19 = Nos. 36-37) present a builder who did major construction work at the Osiris temple of Abydos, work which brought him into close contact with the temple personnel and must have enabled him to select a choice spot for the erection of his memorial : two stelae forming a cenotaph. But note that he does not speak of his monument. Instead, he identifies its purpose by inscribing the larger stela (Louvre C 3) with the full text of the "Later Abydos Formula" and the smaller one (Louvre C 19) with an "Adoration Text". Both texts of course reflect knowledge of the Osirian festivals, but they do not prove actual participation of the living person; for what must have mattered most was the everlasting presence of the transfigured dead in the company of Osiris.

The sculptor **Shen-setji** (No. 38) also came to Abydos to perform work at the temple, and he erected a *m'h't* monument whose text explicitly seeks eternal closeness to the god. His phrasing, moreover, is such as to make it appear possible, or even likely, that this envoy settled down at Abydos and that his *m'h't* was a real tomb.

The envoy **Ded-Iqu** (No. 39) is a clear-cut case. Having completed a mission in the oases country, he stopped off at Abydos, built a *m'h't* cenotaph, consecrated it in the fullness of his life, and went home.

The official **Djaa** was sent to Abydos to inspect its priesthood, and using the occasion to erect a *m'h't*, he inscribed his stela (BM 573 = No. 40) with a shortened version of the Abydos Formula, and a consecration text, which describes his monument as being "on the ground 'mistress of offerings' (*w'rt nb(t) htp*) of Thinite Abydos".

The stela of the chamberlain **Semti the Younger** (BM 574 = No. 41) has an ambitious text befitting its owner's high rank. Having narrated the growth of his career, Semti recalls his important mission of renovating temple statues and implements, which took him all the way to Elephantine. Then, on the return journey, he halted at Abydos and erected his *m'h't*, on the stela of which he pleads with fervor for a spiritual afterlife in close association with Osiris.

The famous stela of the chief treasurer **Ikhernofret** (Berlin 1204 = No. 42) presents a royal envoy to Abydos in his most exalted role : as conductor of the Osirian festivals. Simpson in his Terrace has joined to it ten other stelae belonging to relatives and dependents of Ikhernofret, making of it his ANOC group I.1-11. But as Berlev pointed out, it is not likely that all the stelae stood together in one chapel (BiOr 33, 324ff.) and No. I.11 does not belong, being of later date. Ikhernofret's stela itself sheds no light on its emplacement. But that his monument was called *m'h't* is known from the stela of Minhotep (ANOC I.6 = BM 202) a man who calls himself "son" and seems to have been a subordinate. Schäfer knew most of this group (Mysterien, 6-7 & 39ff.) but took the somewhat defeatist line that, for the interpretation of Ikhernofret's stela, it mattered little whether the "Grabgebäude" was a real tomb or a cenotaph. For more about the meaning of the term *m'h't* turn to p. 92, n. 7.

### 36-37. Two Stelae of the Assistant Seal-Bearer Mery

From Abydos  
Louvre C 3 and C 19  
Sesostris I, year 9

The two pieces have no recorded provenience but they certainly came from Abydos and from the same monument. While differing in shape and size, their style is closely similar, and both show the fine workmanship characteristic of the reign of Sesostris I. The monument is likely to have been a cenotaph rather than a real tomb, for Mery was sent to Abydos on a building mission, and the memorial he erected for himself is of the kind designed for public display.

#### 36. Louvre C 3

PM V, 98. Pierret, Recueil II, 104f.; Piehl, Inscriptions I, iic-iii; Vernus, RdE 25 (1973) 217-232 & pl. 13; Simpson, Terrace, ANOC 6.3, pl. 15. Spiegel, Götter, 82f.; Franke, Personendaten, Dossier 276.

A round-topped limestone stela, 95 x 65 cm. The inscription in twenty-one lines begins in the lunette and covers the greater part of the surface. In the lower register, Mery is shown twice, seated on the left before an offering array, and standing in the center presenting offerings to his parents, Hor and Menkhut, who are seated on the right. In the narrow bottom register are relatives and offering bearers. The tripartite text consists of an

account of his building commission, an offering formula, and the "Abydos Formula" in its full 12th dynasty version.

(1) Year 9, second month of the inundation season, day 20 (2) under the majesty of Horus *Ankh-mesut*, Two Ladies *Ankh-mesut*, King of Upper and Lower Egypt *Kheperkare*, (3) Son of Re *Senwosret*, living forever like Re<sup>1</sup>. His true servant whom he favors (*n st-ib.f*) who does all he praises in the course of each day, the honored one, (4) the richly honored, the Assistant Seal-bearer<sup>2</sup> Mery, born of Menkhut, who says :

I am a servant who is faithful, steadfast, well-loved<sup>3</sup>. (5) It was because of my great fidelity that my lord sent me on the mission to construct for him a seat of eternity of greater renown than Rostau, superior in appointments (6) to all other seats, an excellent ground of gods (*hntt mbrw r st nbt w'rt mnht ntrw*).<sup>4</sup>

Its walls graze the sky;<sup>5</sup>  
the dug-out lake reaches the river;<sup>6</sup>  
the portals dazzle (7) the firmament<sup>7</sup>  
with white stone of Tura;  
and Osiris Khentamenthes rejoices in my lord's monument,  
while I myself am in joy,  
my heart elated by my construction.

(8) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris, lord of Busiris, Khentamenthes, great god, lord of Abydos, (and to) Wepwawet, foremost of Abydos : may Heket and Khnum (9) and all the gods of Abydos give a voice-offering of bread and beer, and 1000 of everything good and pure to the *ka* of the honored Assistant Seal-bearer Mery, born of Menkhut, justified.

*The Abydos Formula*<sup>8</sup>

- 1 May hands be stretched to him (10) with offerings on the feasts of the necropolis together with the followers of Osiris.
- 2 May he be transfigured by the great of Busiris (and) the entourage in Abydos.
- 3 May he open the ways he wishes (11) in peace, in peace.
- 4 May those in Tawer exalt him, the priests of the great god.
- 5 May hands be given him in the *neshmet*-bark on the ways of the west.
- 6 May he ply the oars in the night-bark,
- 7 (12) May he sail in the day-bark,
- 8 May "welcome in peace" be said to him by the great of Abydos.
- 9 May he travel with the great god to Ro-Pequer, the great (13) *neshmet*-bark holding its course, on the feasts of the necropolis.
- 10 May the Bull-of-the-west transfigure him when he joins <him> at his oars.
- 11 May he hear jubilation (14) from the mouth of Tawer at the *Haker*-feast of the night of vigil, the vigil of Horus-the-fighter.<sup>9</sup>

- 12 May he tread the good ways that open (15) the western lightland, to the ground that gives offerings, the portal great of fame.
- 13 May Khnum and Heket transfigure him<sup>10</sup>, (16) the ancestors who rose before <on> the first birthplace of Abydos, who came from the mouth of Re himself when Abydos was sanctified on account of it.
- 14 May they give him (17) pure offerings together with<sup>11</sup> the followers of Osiris.
- 15 May those in Tawer acclaim him, may Osiris advance his seat before the great in the sacred (18) land.
- 16 May he abound in offerings and provisions, the offerings presented to Osiris on the *Wag*-feast, the *Thoth*-feast, the *Flame*-feast, the *New-Year's* feast, the great (19) feasts of the First and of the Great Procession (*ḥbw wr prt tpt '3t*), and all the feasts performed for the great god.
- 17 May Mehun stretch his hand to him with offerings from the great god.
- 18 May he sit down on the right of Osiris (20) before the august nobles.
- 19 May he reach the god's council, may he follow him on all his pure ways in the sacred land.
- 20 May he receive things from the great altar (21) in the course of every day — the honored Assistant Seal-bearer Mery, born of Menkhut.

#### *The Text of the Abydos Formula*

- 1 *Mst(w) n.f 'wy hr ḥtpt m ḥbw nw hrt-nṛ ḥn' šmsw n Wsir.*
- 2 *S3ḥ sw wrw nw Qdw šnyt imit 3bḏw.*
- 3 *Wp.f w3wt mrrt.f m ḥtp m ḥtp.*
- 4 *Sq3 sw imiw T3wr w'bw nw nṛ '3.*
- 5 *Dit(w) n.f 'wy m nšmt ḥr w3wt imnt.*
- 6 *Dsr.f ḥpwt m msktt*
- 7 *Sqd.f m m'ndyt.*
- 8 *Dd.t(w) n.f iw m ḥtp in wrw nw 3bḏw.*
- 9 *Sd3.f ḥn' nṛ '3 r R-Pqr nšmt wrt r nmtwt.s m ḥbw nw hrt-nṛ.*
- 10 *S3ḥ sw k3-imnt ḥkn.n.f m ḥpwt.f.*
- 11 *Sdm.f hnw m r n T3wr h3kr n grḥ n sdrt sdryt nt Hr šn.*
- 12 *Dndn.f w3wt nfrwt pg3w 3ḥt imntt r w'rt rdit ḥtpt 'ryt '3t hmhmt.*
- 13 *S3ḥ sw Hnmw Hqt tp-(wy) ḥprw hr ḥ3t <ḥr> mshnt tpt 3bḏw prw m r n R' ds.f m dsr 3bḏw ḥr.s.*
- 14 *Di.sn n.f ḥtpt w'bt m-' šmsw n Wsir.*
- 15 *Sh' sw imiw T3wr shnt Wsir st.f r wrw imiw t3-dsr.*
- 16 *B'ḥ.f ḥtpt qf3w h3mt ḥt n Wsir m w3g dḥwt rkh tp-tr ḥbw wr(w) prt tpt '3t m ḥbw nbw irr n nṛ '3.*
- 17 *Ms n.f Mḥwn 'f m ḥtpt nt nṛ '3.*
- 18 *Hms.f ḥr imnt nt Wsir m-ḥ3t s'ḥw špsw.*
- 19 *Spr.f d3 d3t nṛ šms.f sw r w3wt.f nbt w'bt imit t3-dsr.*
- 20 *šsp.f ḥt ḥr ḥtp '3 m hrt hrw nt r' nb.*

## Notes

1) As noted before, the practice to begin a biographical stela with a regnal date started in the 11th dynasty and was not limited to officials on mission (see Nos. 25 and 30-32, and p. 74, n. 1). Now here we have a royal emissary, and it is plausible that his dating by regnal year referred to the completion of his mission as well as to the erection of his stela.— 2) Opinion is about equally divided between reading the title as *sd3wty hr-* or *htmw hr-*; see now Ward, Index, no. 1468, and to his references add Vernus, RdE 25, 221ff. — 3) The epithets *mqd-mjn*, '3-*qd*, *bnr-mrwt* are linked to the next sentence which explains their import: it was because of Mery's great fidelity that the king chose him for the mission. The initial *h3b.n w(i)* being a good case of substantivized *sdm.n.f*, the sentence was cited by Polotsky, Transpositions, 22. The article "Treueverhältnis" in LÅ VI, 758f., errs in stating that Egyptian had no word "für den Begriff Treue"; *mqd-mjn* is an exact equivalent of German "Gefolgstreue".— 4) Wb. I, 287f. and Faulkner, Dict. 58 distinguish two meanings of the noun *w'rt*: 1. Administrative district. 2. Necropolis. Faulkner rendered the latter meaning by "desert plateau"; I call it "ground". The two meanings are sometimes distinguished by different determinatives: the canal sign (N. 24) for "district", and the hill-country sign (N. 26) for "necropolis". In Louvre C 3, lines 6 & 15, *w'rt* is spelled with N. 24, hence the context must determine the meaning: *w'rt mnht ntrw* (1. 6) and *w'rt rdit htpt* (1. 15); the context makes it clear that these "grounds" are holy regions, the abode of gods and of the transfigured dead. In the Old Kingdom we already encountered *w'rt nbt m3't* (No. 5, p. 20), and our Middle Kingdom texts have so far yielded: *w'rt rdit htpt* (Nos. 19, 24, 26, pp. 48, 62, 67), *w'rt htpt* (No. 29, p. 71) and *w'rt '3t hmhm* (No. 30, p. 73). We shall also find *w'rt nbt htpt* (No. 40, p. 95, and BM 213, p. 132). The contexts establish that the "ground of offerings" in its several variant formulations meant the cemeteries of Abydos. Whether the terms *w'rt mnht ntrw* and *w'rt '3t hmhm* had a somewhat broader meaning — though certainly in the range of "holy ground" and not "administrative district" — will be discussed when further evidence has been reviewed (pp. 91-92). — 5) *Dm.n* for *dm.ny*; on the form see Edel, ZÄS 84 (1959) 17-38. — 6) *Ph.n.f itrw* was rendered by Vernus as "il égalait le fleuve"; I prefer the literal meaning because I envisage a canal connecting the Nile with the town and linking up with the "lake". — 7) *Thn.n* for *thn.ny*, parallel to *dm.ny*. — 8) Here begins the Abydos Formula in the full version of twenty units as found on private stelae of the 12th dynasty. That the twenty units had been brought into a standardized order is proved by its recurrence in the full version of stela BM 567 (No. 49) and by the fact that when major portions of the formula were cited they tended to adhere to the same order (Nos. 32 & 40). But of course there were variants both in the formulations and in their order, and these occur mostly when only a few sentences of the formula were used. — 9) The little that we know about *haker* as a cultic song and a feast, and about the night of *sdrt Hr-šn*, is summed up by Spiegel, Götter, 147 & 151. Helck, Osirisritual, 74, noted that the Egyptians themselves became unsure of the meaning of *Hr-šn*, as the aberrant spellings indicate. Like Spiegel I believe that *sdrt* here means "vigil", not "sleep". — 10. On Heket and Khnum as assistants in the transfiguration of the dead see Spiegel, Götter, 82ff. — 11. The preposition *m-* here means "together with", as is proved by the parallel use of *hn'* in the same sentence in BM 573.10 and BM 567.13 (Nos. 40 & 49).

### 37. Louvre C 19

Simpson, Terrace, ANOC 6.1, pl. 15; Vernus, op.cit. 233f.

A limestone tablet, 46 x 63 cm. Mery stands on the left and faces left (outward) with arms raised in adoration. On the right, two other assistant seal-bearers, Khety and Hetepui, stand facing each other across an offering stand; they, too, have their arms raised in adoration. The two scenes are framed by brief texts arranged in two lines across the top and one column running down the edge on each side.

#### *Top and right side*

An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris Khentamenthes, great god, lord of Abydos, that he may give a voice-offering of water, bread, beer, beef and fowl to the honored assistant seal-bearer Khety, justified, born of Hetep, justified.

An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Anubis upon his mountain, that he may give a voice-offering of water, bread, and beer to the honored assistant seal-bearer Hetepui, justified, whose good name is 'Hwt-hnty', born of Inset.

#### *Top and left side*

Kissing the ground to Khentamenthes at the Great Procession,  
seeing the beauty of Wepwawet at the First Procession,  
by the honored assistant seal-bearer Mery, justified.<sup>1</sup>

#### Notes

1) Taken together, the two stelae suggest that Mery erected a cenotaph after completing his building assignment. By the cenotaph he commemorated his accomplishment and, at the same time, through the Abydos Formula of the one stela and the Adoration Formula of the other, he prayed for becoming a follower of Osiris in his afterlife, and for being spiritually present at the annual Abydene festival of the god.—What was the building that Mery had constructed? That the building stood at Abydos, and not at Lisht, has been stressed by Vernus and needs no further discussion. What remains open to question is the nature of the Abydene building. Vernus suggested that it was either a cenotaph for Sesostri I, or a royal chapel within the Osiris temple. I tend to think that it was a major portion of the Osiris temple itself, in the shape which the temple assumed during the reign of Sesostri I. It is undisputed that Sesostri I was the principal builder of the Osiris temple in its 12th dynasty form: Louvre C 12 and C 11 of Amenysenb (Nos. 33-34) are primary evidence of that. If one combines Amenysenb's account with that of Mery, and adds to these two the report of Shen-setji (No. 38) and the remarks of the vizier Mentuhotep (CG 20539 from Abydos) one obtains a view of the Osiris temple in the course of its construction during the king's reign. Mentuhotep stated: "I am he who conducted the work in the temple, who built his house, who dug the lake; I built a well at the command of the majesty of my lord Horus." And later: "I gave a contract of payment to the priests of Abydos after I conducted the work of the temple, built of stone of Ayan" (recto 22 & verso 6). Mery worked in the early years of

Sesostris I, while the vizierate of Mentuhotep probably belongs to the latter part of the reign. The reference to limestone could be an allusion to the change from brickwork to stonework. Helck (Osirisritual, 84f.) has stressed that what Sesostris I built was an Osiris-Khentamenthes temple, and not a royal *ka*-house within the old Khentamenthes temple, as previous kings up to Seankhkare Mentuhotep III had done. The very ambiguity of Mery's account – in contrast with the unambiguous statements of Shen-setji, Mentuhotep, and Amenysomb – supports the view that the temple was built in stages by Sesostris I, and embodied the changes which transformed the earlier Khentamenthes temple characterized by royal *ka*-houses into the Osiris-Khentamenthes temple proper – the outstanding sanctuary of the god "to whom all must come".

### 38. Stela of the Master Sculptor Shen-Setji

From Abydos  
Los Angeles County Museum  
Reign of Sesostris I

Faulkner, JEA 38 (1952) 3-5 & pl. I.

Coming from the early plundering of Abydos, the stela was purchased (in Rome?) in 1823 by Lord Kinnaid and reached California by way of a Sotheby sale of 1935. The finely carved round-topped stela measures 87.5 x 36.5 cm. The inscription begins in the lunette with a no longer legible regnal date and fills the upper half of the surface in seventeen lines. The lower half is divided into four narrow registers. In the first one, Shen-setji and his wife Ptahemsas are seated on the left and his parents on the right. Each couple receives offerings from a standing male relative. The three lower registers are filled with numerous family members lined up in rows.

(1) Year...<sup>1</sup> [under the majesty of Horus *Ankh-mesut*] (2) [Two Ladies] *Ankh-mesut*, King of Upper and Lower Egypt *Kheperkare*, beloved of Osiris, ruler of eternity.<sup>2</sup>

(3) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris Khentamenthes, lord of Abydos, (to) Wepwawet, lord of the sacred land,<sup>3</sup> (and to) Anubis (4) on his mountain, that he may give a voice-offering of 1000 bread and beer, 1000 beef and fowl, 1000 alabasters and clothing, and 1000 of all pure things, to the *ka* of the honored Master-Sculptor (*mr-gnwty*) Shen-setji<sup>4</sup> (5) justified :

His seat was advanced in this temple,<sup>5</sup>

houses (and) towns of eternity (*prw niwwt nt nhḥ*),

(6) excellent ground of gods (*w'rt mnḥt ntrw*),

superior in appointments to any other seat (*ḥntt mḥrw r st nbt*),  
wherewith this god is content;

great seat (7) of the thrones of Geb,

hiding place of the mysteries in Abydos,  
(8) toward which Re shines his face,  
when he sets in life in the west,<sup>6</sup>  
his heart gladdened thereby.

*Consecration Text*

I have come in peace to (9) this monument (*m'h't tn*)<sup>7</sup>  
which I made in the western lightland of Thinite Abydos,<sup>8</sup>  
at the place of eternity everlasting,  
at the terrace of the august god (*r rd n ntr šps*),<sup>9</sup>  
(10) the honored master-sculptor Shen-setji; he says :

*Appeal to the living and Offering Formula*

O you who are alive on earth,  
who love life, (11) who hate death (*hpt*) :  
As you follow Wepwawet in all his strides,  
your hearts content with life on earth,  
(12) you shall give me a voice-offering  
at the Monthly feast, the Half-monthly feast, the New Year's feast, the  
First and the Great Procession<sup>10</sup>, the Thoth feast when the god comes, (13)  
the Wag-feast, the Flame feast, the Sokar feast, the Beginning-of-the-season,  
the *s3d*-feast, the Procession of Min, the *Haker* feast, the Vigil (14) of Peqer,  
the Numbering feast, the Five Days' feast, all the good feasts of the house of  
Osiris – the honored Shen-setji.

You shall (15) also say : 1000 bread and beer, 1000 beef and fowl,  
1000 alabasters and clothing, 1000 of all pure things that have gone before  
the great god, for the honored master-sculptor Shen-setji, born of (16) Iyet.

*The Account*

I have been sculptor in Itj-tawy of Amenemhet, given eternal life. Then  
I came to this temple to work (17) under the majesty of the King of Upper  
and Lower Egypt *Kheperkare*, beloved of Khentamenthes, lord of Abydos,  
given life like Re for all eternity.

**Notes**

1) The date is lost, but text and relief style suggest a date within the first half of the reign :  
having been a sculptor working for the now deceased king Amenemhet I, Shen-setji was  
commissioned by Sesostri I to work on the Osiris temple at Abydos. Thus he may have  
worked under Mery, or some years later when construction of the temple continued. — 2)  
Note the epithet "beloved of Osiris", replacing the usual "son of Re", and repeated as  
"beloved of Khentamenthes" in Shensetji's closing statement. — 3) The growing  
importance of Wepwawet (see p. 74, n. 5) is here marked by his being given the epithet  
usually associated with Anubis. — 4) That the name is Shen-setji, (*šn-sṯi*), not Shen, was  
noted by Berlev in his review of Simpson's *Terrace* in *BiOr* 33 (1976), 326 n. 1. — 5) This



probably means that Shen-setji was given a permanent appointment as a member of the Osiris temple personnel, and what follows is a panegyric on the temple. All the epithets after *r-pr pn* appear to stand in direct apposition, though it is arguable (as Faulkner did) that the term *prw niwwt nt nhh* envisages both the temple and the cemeteries. All the other epithets, however, fit the temple better than the cemeteries, and note that the terms *w'rt mnht ngrw* and *hntt mhrw r st nbt* were also used by Mery for his construction (see pp. 86 and 88). Adding it all up, one obtains the impression that *w'rt mnht ngrw* and *w'rt '3t hmhmt* have a somewhat wider connotation than *w'rt rdit htpt* with its variants, in that they evoke the holiness of Abydos in its totality of temples and cemeteries. On the BM stela 193 (HT II, 33) the owner prays for a welcome by the gods *hr w'rt '3t snd nbt hmhmt iwt n.s ntt iwt ht.p.n ngr '3 hr.s*, "on the ground great of awe, mistress of renown, to which comes what is and is not, after the great god has gone to rest on it". (The passage was first explained by Spiegel, WZKM 54, 1957, 197f.; see also our No. 48 with p. 113, n. 4). — 6) I am assuming that *di.f m 'nh* is synonymous with *htp.f m 'nh*, but I have no proof. — 7) The opening of the consecration text — *ii.n(.i) m htp r m'h't tn* — shows the, to us, baffling ambiguity of the word *m'h't*. Intef-iqer (No. 30) had said *iw.n.i grt r is pn*. Thus both used the old opening statement of "coming to one's tomb", in which *is* is the relatively unambiguous term for a real tomb, whereas *m'h't* means what? Kemp in his article "Abydos" (LÄ I, 28ff.) tried to resolve the ambiguity by the following definition: "*m'h't* must designate simply a building containing a stele, and not specifically a cenotaph for someone buried elsewhere". This definition, however, fails to take into account that the "tomb of Osiris" was also called *m'h't* (No. 42, line 20) — surely not "a building with a stele". Shen-setji's text creates the impression that he remained at Abydos after completing his mission and hence built a real tomb. But by and large, *m'h't* seems to mean an abode for the transfigured dead i.e. a "cenotaph" in the broad sense of the term. Consult also Simpson's excellent article "Kenotaph" in LÄ III, 387-391. — 8) We have observed that in conjunction with "afterlife wishes" the term "western lightland" (*3ht imntt* refers to the celestial regions in which Osiris dwells (pp. 48, 60, 61). In this consecration text, however, the "western lightland of Thinite Abydos" is of course the cemetery region, and so also on the stela of Nakhty (No. 26, p. 67). Now when Rudjahau had spoken of being "front-ranked in the western lightland" (p. 71) Faulkner and Schenkel took it to mean that he held office in a religious establishment (Faulkner: "perhaps the tomb of Osiris", Schenkel: "ein Gebäude, o. ä."). This seems to me unlikely, and I propose to combine the clear statement of Shen-setji with the earlier "afterlife wishes" and conclude that in Osirian afterlife wishes, and in other texts of Abydene stelae, the term "western lightland" meant the celestial western regions and the cemeteries of Abydos (Using different terms, Spiegel, Götter, 154f., came to the same conclusion). This compatible double meaning is an exact parallel to the double meaning of *bi3*, which embraced the sky and the western desert (see p. 58). — 9) Like others before and after him, Shen-setji built his *m'h't* "at" the terrace/stairway of the august god" (see p. 68, n. 3, and p. 73). The full discussion of the "terrace/stairway" is held over to the end of this chapter. Suffice it to say at this point that Faulkner's rendering of Shen-setji's *rd n ngr šps* as "the tomb-shaft of the august god", cannot be maintained. — 10) The abbreviated writing of *pri tpt '3t* for what were two distinct festivals also occurs in Louvre C 3 (see p. 87).

### 39. Stela of the Steward Ded-Iqu

From Abydos  
Berlin 1199  
Sesostris I, year 34

PM V, 97. Schäfer, ZÄS 42 (1905) 124-128 and photo; Aegypt. Inschr. I, 164f. Fischer, JNES 16 (1957) 223ff.

Of unrecorded provenience but certainly from Abydos, and known to have been in the Anastasi collection, this is a small and modest limestone stela, 45 cm. high. The upper half is filled by the inscription in ten lines. Below, Ded-Iqu (*Dd-iqw*) and his wife Qehi (*Qḥi*) are seated on the left and are presented with a leg of ox by a son called Amenemhet. While the carving is crude, the text is phrased with competence. Here we have a middle-level official who had been sent on a mission into the oasis region to the west of Abydos and who on his return journey stopped at Abydos in order to erect a modest memorial to himself. Called *m'h't*, the monument was almost certainly a simple cenotaph consisting of a stela and an offering stone. As for the regnal date, the context suggests that it refers to the culminating moment of the mission: the erection of the private memorial after the successful completion of the official mission.

(1) Year 34 under the majesty of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt *Kheperkare*, Good God, Lord of the Two Lands, lord of action (2) beloved of all gods, Son of Re *Senwosret*, living forever and ever.

(3) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris, lord of Busiris, Khentamenthes great god, lord of Abydos, (4) a voice-offering of bread, beer, loaves, fowl, 1000 alabasters and clothing, everything good and pure on which a god lives, to one honored (5) before the great god, lord of heaven, to the Steward Ded-Iqu (*mr-pr Dd-iqw*).

#### *Narration and Consecration*

I came from Thebes as a King's Friend,

(6) one who does all that he favors,  
as commander of young recruits,  
to secure the land of the oasis-dwellers;<sup>1</sup>

(7) an effective official known to his lord,  
of excellent counsel before (him),  
and esteemed by (8) the palace grandees.

Thereupon I made this monument (*'ḥ.n ir.n(i) m'h't tn*)

at the terrace of the great god,

for the sake of being in (9) his following,

and the soldiers serving his majesty presented things to my *ka*,

(each one) of his bread (10) and best *ḥsmn*,  
as is done for a royal envoy,  
who came to secure his majesty's borders.<sup>2</sup>

#### Notes

1) Probably the Kharga Oasis is meant. On Egyptian control of the oases see Fischer, loc. cit., and *ibid.* p. 228, on the envoy Ded-Iqu who "secured" (*irt rwd* and *srwd*) the oasis for the king. See also Osing in *Mélanges Mokhtar* II, 189f. — 2) The consecration text is closely integrated with the narration of the event that brought this official to Abydos, and it describes the circumstances under which the *m'ḥ't* was erected: having been on a mission elsewhere, he passed through Abydos in order to set up his memorial. Consecrating it included receiving offerings then and there. *Rwd*, "terrace", has the house determinative.

### 40. Stela of the Hall-Keeper Djaa

From Abydos

BM 573

Sesostris II, year 6

PM V, 95f. HT II, 6.

A round-topped limestone stela, 103 x 62 cm. The inscription begins in the lunette, under the winged sun-disk, and fills the upper half of the stela in thirteen lines. The last two lines are shorter, leaving space on the right-hand side for the names of Djaa's five brothers. In the register below the inscription, Djaa is seated on the left, facing an offering table and the seated figures of his mother and grandfather, and below them, two male relatives approaching with offerings. In the bottom register are the standing figures of Djaa's five sisters, his grandmother, and his nurse.

From the middle of the 12th dynasty onward, the private biographical stelae of Abydos were increasingly concerned with including the stelae owners' relatives and other household members.

(1) Year 6 under the majesty of Horus *Seshemu-tawy*, (2) Two Ladies *Sekha-maat-netjeru*, King of Upper and Lower Egypt *Khakheperre*, Son of Re *Senwosret*, given life forever like Re.

(3) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris, lord of Busiris, Khentamenthes great god, lord of Abydos; an offering-that-Heket-gives together with (4) Khnum; an offering-that-all-gods-of-Abydos-give: a voice-offering of bread, beer, beef, fowl, alabaster, clothing, and everything good and pure that has come before the great god, for the *ka* of the honored (5) Hall-keeper Djaa (*iry-'t D33*) justified.

1 May hands be stretched to him with offerings on the feasts of the necropolis together with the followers (6) of Osiris.<sup>1</sup>

- 2 May he be transfigured by the great of Busiris (and) the entourage in Abydos.
- 3 May he open the ways he wishes (7) in peace, in peace.
- 4 May those in Tawer exalt him, the priests of the great god.
- 5 May hands be given him in the *neshmet*-bark on the ways of the west.
- 10 (8) <May the Bull-of-the-west transfigure him><sup>2</sup> when you (*sic*) join him at his oars.
- 11 May I (*sic*) hear jubilation from the mouth of Tawer at the *Haker* feast on the night of vigil, (9) the vigil of Horus-the-fighter.
- 12 May he tread the good ways at the opening of the western lightland.
- 13 May (10) Khnum and Heket transfigure him, the ancestors who rose before.
- 14 May they give him pure offerings together with<sup>3</sup> the followers of Osiris.
- 17 (11) May Mehun stretch his hand to him with offerings from the great god on the feasts of the necropolis.

#### *Consecration Text*

I have now made this monument (*ir.n.i grt m'h't tn*)  
 (12) on the ground mistress-of-offerings in Thinite Abydos,<sup>4</sup>  
 while being there (13) as Senior Controller (3*tw* '3),  
 and the priesthood of the temple bear offerings  
 that have come from the great god  
 for the *ka* of the Hall-keeper Djaa, justified.<sup>5</sup>

#### Notes

1) Compare the shortened version of the Abydos Formula that begins here with the full version of No. 36, and with the other partial version of eleven wishes of No. 32. When choices from the full version were made, certain wishes were favored, and there was a tendency to retain certain sequences in their standard order. Note also the shortening or enlarging of individual wishes. — 2) The scribal error of omitting the first half of the sentence is followed by two other errors : *hkn.k* for *hkn.f*, and in the next sentence, *sdm.i* for *sdm.f*. While faulty here, the change of person was appropriate when some Abydos Formula wishes were rephrased in conjunction with other wishes, e.g. in Nos. 50 & 51, pp. 117 & 119 with n. 2. — 3) On *hn'* replacing *m'* see p. 88, n. 11. — 4) On *w'rt nbt htpt* see p. 88, n. 4. — 5) Compare this consecration text with the preceding one of the steward Ded-Iqu. Both men describe the erection of the monument as a work performed in the fullness of their lives. But Ded-Iqu recounts it as an action that has taken place just then or recently, whereas in Djaa's account the *m'h't* has assumed its timeless role of providing offerings for its now deceased owner : *wnwt ht-ntr 'wy.sn hr htpt prt m ntr '3 n k3 n iry-'t Dj33 m3' hrw*.

## 41. Stela of the Chamberlain Semti the Younger

From Abydos

BM 574

Reign of Amenemhet II

PM V, 95. Piehl, *Inscriptions III*, xvR-xvi; HT II, 8-9; Sethe, *Les.*, no. 16, p. 75; Simpson, *Terrace*, ANOC 42.2, pl. 61. Gardiner, *JEA* 39 (1953) 26f.; Edel, *ZÄS* 87 (1962) 102f. Spiegel, *Götter*, 127f.; Franke, *Personendaten*, Dossier no. 597.

Of unrecorded provenience but certainly from Abydos (and from the Anastasi collection) this round-topped painted limestone stela measures 91 x 49 cm. The inscription starts below the emblem of Horus of Behdet, which occupies the lunette, and its twenty-two lines cover the entire surface except for a space in the lower left corner which has the standing figures of Semti the Younger and his mother Set-ity.

(1) Horus *Heken-em-maat*, King of Upper and Lower Egypt *Nebkaure*, beloved of Osiris Khentamenthes, given life. (2) His true servant whom he favors (*n st-ib.f*),<sup>1</sup> Privy to the secrets of the king's adornment, the Chamberlain Semti (*imy-ḥnt Smti*) says :

His majesty placed me (3) at his feet in my youth,<sup>2</sup>

and my name was called before my peers.

Then his majesty would address (4) me,

and observe my daily behavior.<sup>3</sup>

I was indeed someone who grows,

and was praised (5) today more than yesterday.

I had become a true King's Friend

when his majesty accepted my services :

The officials being placed in their stations,

(6) office was bestowed on me in their presence,

that of Chamberlain and Privy to the mysteries,<sup>4</sup>

Priest of the South-Crown and North-Crown,

(7) Khnum-servant of the king's adornment,

who fashions the Great-of-Magic,

lifts up the White Crown in Per-wer,

chief Nekhebite and servant (8) of the Red Crown in Per-nu,

hand-in-hand with the Wise one,<sup>5</sup>

one whose coming is awaited as Adorner with the Crown,

in (9) making-appear-in-glory Horus, lord of the palace.

Nurse of the god in the private apartment,

who gives the Eye to him from whom it comes,

Controller of Sais (10) as leader of the mysteries,

lord of awe in the mansion of the Red Crown,

senior companion in the gold-house,  
when the god is born in the morning.

(11) When I first came to his majesty, he made me inspect (the statues of) his fathers, the gods, that I might remove damage and restore their workmanship (12) to be a thing of eternity. I was ordered to gild their metal vessels, the fine gold being under my (13) seal. I reached Elephantine as commanded, so as to kiss the ground to the lord of the cataract.

When I returned from doing what I had journeyed (14) for, I staked the mooring post at Abydos. I set<sup>6</sup> my name (15) at the place where the god is – Osiris Khentamenthes, lord of eternity, ruler of the west, (16) to whom hastes what exists<sup>7</sup> – in order to be a spirit there amidst the followers (17) of the lord of life, that I may eat his bread, may come forth by day, that my *ba* may make (18) lamentation.<sup>8</sup>

People ! be kind-hearted to my monument (*m'h't.i*)

and kind-handed (19) to my memorial ! (*srh.i*)

For I have not done wrong.

I gladdened the god with (20) rightness (*maat*)

so as to be there ensouled, transfigured (*b3.kwi 3h.kwi*)

in the desert (21) the mistress of eternity,

that I may guide the helm

on entering the *neshmet*-bark,

and kiss the ground to Wepwawet –

the chamberlain Semti the Younger, justified, honored.

#### Notes

1) The form of the opening statement – royal name without date, followed by "his true servant ...," was created in the 11th dynasty, see Nos. 19 & 20. — 2) The speech combines the narration of a career with the description of the functions of a royal chamberlain and "master of ceremonies" who performed the robing and crowning of the king. On the ceremonies see Gardiner, loc. cit. and Edel, loc. cit. — 3) The word is *bi(3)t*, here, as often, "behavior", rather than "character". — 4) To render *st3* here as "mysteries" (as Gardiner did) appears suitable (though by and large the neutral term "secrets" is safer), since Semti's phrases invoke the sacred and awesome nature of the ceremonies. But neither these nor the Osiris mysteries were mysteries in the Greek sense. — 5) The "wise one", *rht*, must be a goddess : Isis ? Hathor ? — 6) The old perfective *wd.k(w)i*, and the earlier ones in lines 4-5 (*wn.k(w)i*, *hpr.k(w)i*) are the first-person narrative old perfectives discussed by Gardiner, Gr. § 312. — 7) The phrase *rw n.f ntt wn* must be seen in conjunction with *inw n.f ntt iwt* of Leiden V 6 (No. 48, p. 112 with n. 6) and *iw n.f ntt iwt* of BM 567 (No. 49, p. 115). Wherever it occurs, it means that all people must come to the realm of the dead where Osiris rules. Sethe was mistaken when he suggested (Erl. 63,5 and 75,18) that it referred to "Wallfahrten zu Osiris von Abydos". The error has now been repeated by Jansen-Winkel, Biographien, I, p. 41, n. 14. The matter is stated rightly by Homung, Der Eine, 167 with n. 111. — 8) *Irtyw* (in *ir b3.i irtyw*) is surely "lamentation", and not "blue linen". To "receive blue linen", as Spiegel rendered (Götter, 127) would require a verb other than *iri*. —

9) The final section declares the purpose of the *m'h't* monument in terms other than the usual statements of the consecration texts. Formulated as an address to readers of the stela, it combines a self-justification with a prayer for an Osirian spiritual afterlife. – Like Ded-Iqu and Djaa (Nos. 39 & 40) Semti used the opportunity of a royal mission to stop at Abydos in order to set up a memorial to himself, a memorial which, by all indications, was not a tomb but rather a cenotaph or a single stela.

## 42. Stela of the Overseer of the Treasury Ikhernofret

From Abydos  
Berlin 1204  
Reign of Sesostri III

PM V, 97. Schäfer, *Mysterien*; Aegypt. Inschr. I, 169-175; Sethe, *Les.*, no. 14, pp. 70f.; Simpson, *Terrace*, ANOC 1.1, pl. 1. ANET, 329f.; Lichtheim, AEL I, 123-125. Helck, *ArchOr.* 20 (1952), 72ff.; Anthes in *Fs Berlin*, 15-49; Leprohon, *JARCE* 15 (1979) 33-38; Franke, *Personendaten*, Dossier no. 27.

A massive round-topped limestone stela, 100 x 65 x 20 cm., framed by a raised border. In the lunette, under the winged sundisk, the standing figure of Osiris faces the titulary of Sesostri III. Below it is the main text in twenty-four lines. At the bottom, Ikhernofret is seated on the left, facing an offering table and members of his family. On the raised border are the full titularies of Sesostri III and of Ikhernofret.

(1) The living Horus *Netjery-khepru*, Two Ladies *Netjery-mesut*, Gold-Horus *Kheper*, King of Upper and Lower Egypt *Khakaure*, Son of Re *Senwosret*, given life forever like Re.

(2) King's command to the Prince, Count, Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, Overseer of the Two Gold-houses, Overseer of the Two Silver-houses, Overseer of the Treasury, Ikhernofret (*mr-sḏwt li-ḥr-nfrt*) :

(3) My majesty deigns to have you journey upstream to Thinite Abydos, to make monuments for my father Osiris Khentamenthes, and to adorn his secret (4) image with the fine gold which he has let my majesty bring back from Nubia in triumphant victory.

You will surely do this in (5) the best manner of acting for the benefit of my father Osiris. For my majesty sends you confident that you will do everything (6) to the heart's content of my majesty. For you were brought up as a pupil of my majesty. You have indeed grown up as a foster-son of my majesty (7) and sole pupil of my palace. My majesty made you a Companion when you were a youth of twenty-six years. My majesty did this (8) because I saw you as one of excellent counsel, keen of tongue, who came from the

womb as a wise one. Now my majesty (9) sends you to do this because my majesty knows that no one could do it all except you. Go then and return when you have done all that my majesty commanded.<sup>1</sup>

(10) I acted<sup>2</sup> according to all that his majesty had commanded in furnishing all that my lord had commanded for his father Osiris Khentamenthes, lord of Abydos, great power in the nome of This.

(11) I served as "his beloved son" for Osiris Khentamenthes, and I furnished [his] great ['image'] of eternity and everlastingness.<sup>3</sup>

I made for him (12) the palanquin "Carrier of the beauty of Khentamenthes" of gold, silver, lapis lazuli, bronze, *ssndm*-wood, and *mrw*-wood. The gods (13) who attend him were fashioned, their shrines were made anew.

I made the hour-priests of the temple [diligent] at their tasks, and made them know (14) the ritual of every day and of the feasts of the beginnings-of-the-seasons.

I directed the work on the *neshmet*-bark; I fashioned the cabin.

(15) I adorned the breast of the lord of Abydos with lapis lazuli and turquoise, fine gold and all costly stones as (16) ornaments of the god's limbs.

I clothed the god in his regalia, in my office of Master-of-Secrets, my function of Stolist.

(17) I was pure of hand in adorning the god, a priest whose fingers are clean.

I conducted the Procession of Wepwawet when he goes forth to rescue his father<sup>4</sup>. (18) I repulsed the attackers of the *neshmet*-bark, I felled the foes of Osiris.

I conducted the Great Procession and followed the god in his strides. (19) I made the god's boat sail, Thoth guiding the sailing. I equipped the bark "Truly-risen-is-the-lord-of-Abydos" with a cabin (20) and affixed his beautiful regalia, that he might proceed to the domain of Peqer.

I cleared the god's path to his tomb (*m'h't*) in Peqer. (21) I rescued Wennofer on that day of great combat, and felled all his foes on the shore of Nedyt.

I made him go (22) inside the Great Bark, and it bore his beauty. I rejoiced the heart of the eastern deserts, I caused jubilation in the western deserts (23) when they saw the beauty of the *neshmet*-bark as it landed at Abydos.

I brought [Osiris Khentamenthes, lord of] Abydos, to his palace. I followed the god to his house. (24) His cleansing was done; his seat was made spacious, as I loosened the knot in ---; ['he came to rest' among] his followers, his retinue.



## Notes

1) Compare the accounts of Wepwawet-aa and Senti (Nos. 31-32 & 41) about their youths, their rises in rank, and their being chosen for special missions or highest positions, with that of Ikhnofret. They share similar and identical formulations; but where the former give the background of their appointments in the form of self-presentations, Ikhnofret relates it in terms of a royal speech. One gets an insight into the various schemes of self-presentations. Here the royal command incorporates the laudation of the official. And the genre "royal speech" had a precursor in the "royal letter", such as the letter king Pepi II sent to his envoy Harkhuf (Urk. I, 128-131) — 2) *Ir.kwi* is another of those first-person old perfectives of which Senti had made such ample use. Gardiner, Gr. §310 had taken it to be a geminating form, but Edel, ZÄS 84 (1959) 105ff. has shown that there are no geminating old perfectives of *tertia infirmæ* verbs. — 3) Sethe's restoration *wi3fwr*, "his great bark", was rightly questioned by Anthes, loc. cit. p. 33, n. 31. The *wr* bird is visible on Simpson's pl. 1. The illegible noun must have been a word for the cult statue of Osiris, whether *bsw* of line 3, or another. — 4) Here begins Ikhnofret's account of his leading the performance of the Osiris mysteries. As to the content and sequence of the Osirian festival that scholars call the "Osiris mysteries" we know today not much more about its Middle Kingdom form than what Schäfer had extrapolated from the sources in his basic monograph of 1904 cited above. For readers not familiar with the problems some further references are cited here: The sober articles "Osiris" and "Mysterien" in Bonnet's RÄRG. Helck, "Osirisritual" in ArchOr 20 (1952) 42-85. The entries "Hakerfest" and "Mysterien" in LÄ II, 929ff. and LÄ IV, 276f. Spiegel, Götter, 147ff. The labored reconstruction of the "mysteries" by Anthes, "Die Berichte des Neferhotep und des Ikhnofret über das Osirisfest in Abydos" in Fs Berlin. And for the Osirian festival as celebrated in the Late Period, E. Chassinat, Le Mystère d'Osiris au mois de Khoiak. 2v. Cairo 1966-1968. — For the festival performed at Abydos in the Middle Kingdom, there is general agreement among scholars only on the one basic fact that the festival encompassed four distinct acts: 1. The "first procession", led by the god Wepwawet, which entailed combat against the enemies of Osiris. 2. The "great procession" of Osiris, the Egyptian accounts of which are so deliberately reticent as to defy all modern attempts to establish what took place. The surmises of Schäfer, Helck, and Anthes differ widely. There is consensus only on the one point that an image representing the dead Osiris was, in the course of the act, conveyed to the god's tomb in Peqer. 3. The renewal of the god's image during a night of *sdrt*, rendered as "sleep" or as "vigil". This seems to have been the most secret part of the whole secret proceedings. The festivity called "the night of *haker*" appears to have been a part of this act. The sources also name a great slaughter of rebels at this point. 4. The return voyage to Abydos of the renewed divine image among scenes of general rejoicing, and the god's reentry into his temple.

### 3. "PILGRIMS"

We have here one self-declared pilgrim, the man **Ankhu** (No. 43) who tells that he had come to Abydos in order to worship Osiris and on that occasion erected a memorial stela. And then there is one example of "pilgrimage by proxy", the official **Nebipusenwosret** (No. 56) who sent his memorial stela to Abydos in the care of an Abydene priest.

In all other cases, the texts in this section suggest, rather than prove, that the owners of the stelae were "pilgrims" in either of two senses : persons who came to Abydos to participate in the annual Osirian festivals and on that occasion dedicated memorials to themselves, or persons who had come to Abydos, at whatever time of the year, in order to set up a memorial. In either case, the enduring monument, not the visit itself, was the main purpose. Indeed, for the time of the Middle Kingdom with which we are concerned, there is no evidence that anybody came to Abydos for the sake of the festivals only. The coming to Abydos was designed specifically for preparing a spirit-life, after physical death, which would be lived in close association with Osiris. This also means that "pilgrimage" in the usual sense of the word, i.e. going to a holy place during a festival or otherwise in order to enhance and bless one's life-on-earth did not occur at all in the cult of Middle Kingdom Abydos.

"Pilgrims", then, were persons who came to Abydos to erect cenotaphs or single stelae, designed to establish a close association with Osiris in their lives-after-death, and to ensure them benefits from the temple ceremonies. That the monuments, when not single stelae, were cenotaphs rather than real tombs is a reasonable inference. By and large, the texts suggest that the word *is* stood for a real tomb (Nos. 26, 27, 30 and 31) and that *m'h't* or *'h't* meant "cenotaph"; and in one well known New Kingdom passage, the two terms are deliberately contrasted in the two senses (Urk. IV, 27.16 = Wb. II, 49.14). However, one of our texts – No. 38, of Shen-setji – had employed the traditional phrase of "coming to one's tomb", with *m'h't* substituted for *is* (see p. 92, n. 7).

After our "true pilgrim" **Ankhu** – whose jaunty text arouses the thought that he was a dweller in the Thinite nome who was making a brief excursion to Abydos – comes the high and self-important official **Mentuwasre** (No. 44). His handsome stela, called '*b*', was a royal gift and may well have stood as a single stela, rather than being part of a cenotaph.

The three stelae of **Intef son of Sent** (Nos. 45-47) are the best example of an Abydene cenotaph at the peak period of Osirian worship. The

three texts are carefully interconnected, and the self-laudations are complemented by suitable afterlife wishes and fervent praises of the holy ground of Abydos on which stands his *'h't*.

The **Intef** of Leiden V 6 (No. 48) has a classic Consecration text which recurs verbatim on BM 567 (No. 49). It places the *m'h't* firmly on the hallowed ground of the Abydene western desert. Intef adds a well-rounded appeal for offerings and an eloquent self-laudation. **Amenemhet** of No. 49 concentrates on afterlife wishes, citing the full text of the Abydos Formula on his BM stela and additional wishes on his Cairo stela (No. 50).

The three stelae of **Imeny** (Nos. 51-53) were discussed by Simpson as the paradigm of his ANOC assemblages, for their stylistic similarities and textual interconnections make it evident that they stood together in a chapel (Terrace, 14-16). The texts consist entirely of prayers for offerings, for spiritual presence at the Osirian festivals, and for reception into the company of the god, the wishes being drawn selectively from the stock of the Abydos Formula.

The two stelae of **Inher-nakht** (Nos. 54-55) typify the *m'h't* monument of a minor official in the latter part of the 12th dynasty. With biographical elements reduced to a minimum, the emphasis is on the Consecration text, followed by elements of the Abydos Formula, and ending in an Adoration text (No. 54), and in a combination of Offering Formula and Adoration text (No. 55).

The last of this group is our "pilgrim by proxy", the official **Nebipusenwosret** (No. 56) who sent his stela (BM 101) to Abydos in the care of an Abydene priest. Composed and carved at the royal residence, the text combines worship of the deceased king Sesostri III, under whom the official had reached manhood, with the adoration of Osiris and Wepwawet at their festive processions, and a lengthy appeal for offerings addressed to the Abydene priesthood.

Throughout the Middle Kingdom period of Osirian worship at Abydos there were worshippers who erected stelae the texts of which consisted of hymns to Osiris, introduced by brief self-presentations of the worshippers. Three such hymns (Nos. 57-59) conclude our selection of Middle Kingdom stelae from Abydos.

### 43. Stela of Sehetepibre and Ankhu

From Abydos  
Liège, Musée Curtius  
12th Dynasty

PM V, 101. B. van de Walle in Capart Fs, 563-574.

A rectangular limestone stela with cornice and molding, 35 x 22.5cm. The three-line text is carved on the cornice in place of a cavetto design. Below it are relief scenes in four registers. In the top register Sehetepibre sits on the left facing an offering table and his wife who squats on the ground. His legend reads : One honored before the great god, lord of Abydos, lord of the sacred land, Sehetepibre born of Senti. His wife's legend reads : The honored one, his wife Sat-Khnum (*S3t-hnmw*) born of Sat-Montu (*S3t-mntw*). In the second register his son Ankhu sits on the left facing an offering table and the standing figures of his two wives and two daughters. Ankhu's legend reads : One honored before Osiris, lord of Abydos, Ankhu (*'nhw*) born of Sat-Khnum. Ankhu's siblings are seated in the third register, and the bottom register has a beer brewing scene.

The son Ankhu, as he tells us, erected the stela on the occasion of a visit to the Osiris temple. Here then we have one of the few instances of a self-declared pilgrim, though there is no way of knowing whether he had come to Abydos from outside the Thinite nome. The brief text is curious :

(1) The honored Ankhu says :<sup>1</sup>

I am a brave one who beats one braver than himself,<sup>2</sup>  
who snatches the wind of (2) the sky (while) at rest,  
and I sit on the south of my house,<sup>3</sup>  
a papyrus top in (my) hand.

(3) I made this stela when I had come to worship the monument of Osiris, lord of Abydos, lord of the sacred land.

#### Notes

1) I divide the three lines thus :

(1) *im3 h(w) 'nhw dd.f* /

*ink qn hw qn r.f* /

*šd 3w (2) pt htp* /

*hms.i m-hnt n pr.i* /

*tp n idhw m drt(.i)* /

(3) *ir.n(.i) 'b' pn hft iwt(.i) hr šms mnw Wsir nb 3bqwb nb t3 dsr.* —

2) For *ink qn hw qn r.f* compare the claim of the Soldier Fegu (No. 14) : *ink qn m-m qnw*.

— 3) The phrase *m-hnt n pr.i* could mean "before my house", but the sentence recalls Coffin Text Spell 355 where the deceased declares that in all cases he will sit on the lee side

of his house : in case of north-wind he will sit on the south side (*hr rsy*). If I understand the stela text at all, Ankhu is saying that he was a very capable person who came out on top in every situation.

#### 44. Stela of the Steward Mentuwsre

From Abydos  
Metropolitan Museum 12.184  
Sesostris I, year 17

PM V, 102. C. Ransom-Williams, *The Stela of Menthu-weser*, New York 1913; Sethe, *Les.*, no. 19, pp. 79f.; Hayes, *Scepter I*, 299f. & fig. 195.

An upright rectangular painted limestone stela, 103 x 50 cm., of excellent quality. The surface is divided in two halves. In the upper half is the inscription in three lines and sixteen columns. In the lower half Mentuwsre is seated on the left, facing an offering table, two sons, and a daughter.

(1) Year 17 under the majesty of Horus *Ank-mesut*, the Good God *Kheperkare*, ever living. My majesty gives you this stela as (2) an offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris, the great god, lord of Abydos<sup>1</sup>, that he may give a voice-offering of bread and beer, beef and fowl, alabaster and clothing, and all things good and pure (3) on which a god lives, to the *ka* of the honored Steward Mentuwsre, born of Abihu (*mr-pr Mntw-wsr ms n 'b-iḥw*). He says :

(4) I am one who cares for the sick, buries the dead, gives goods to one in need.<sup>2</sup>

(5) I am a brave second in the king's house, one sent for strength of character.<sup>3</sup>

I was overseer of the double granary at the count of (6) northern barley.

I was overseer of people in excess of thousands.

I was overseer of cattle, overseer of (7) goats, overseer of donkeys, overseer of sheep, overseer of swine.

I delivered clothing to the treasury (8) the accounting being in my charge in the king's house, and I was acclaimed and thanked.

I am one generous with fodder (9) and food; one whom I gave did not lack; I dealt big meat cuts to those seated (10) beside me.

I am one loved of his kindred, one close to his kin; I did not avert the face from one in (11) servitude.

I am father to the orphan, support of widows; no man slept hungry (12) in my district.

I hindered no man at the ferry; I maligned no man to his superior; I paid no heed to (13) calumny.

I am one who speaks in the presence of nobles, one free of talking gossip.<sup>4</sup>

I am one who listens to (14) justice, and leans not to him who can pay.

I am wealthy, rich in treasure, free of loss in all my (15) goods.

I am owner of oxen, rich in goats, owner of donkeys, rich in sheep. I am rich in barley and spelt, opulent (16) in clothing, without loss in all my wealth.

I am rich in ships, great in vintages.<sup>5</sup>

Now as for all people (17) who shall harken to this stela ('b'), who are among the living and shall say, "It is true", and whose children shall say to their children (18) "It is true, there is no lie in it", and as for every scribe who shall read this stela and all people who shall approach it : as you love life and hate death (19) and as Khentamenthes will love you and favor you at his terrace<sup>6</sup>, you shall say, "Bread, beer, beef, fowl, food offerings to the owner of this stela".

#### Notes

- 1) With regard to the regnal dates on stelae Nos. 30, 31-32, 36, 39 and 40, we noted that they do not signify that the stelae owners were envoys on official missions; rather do they indicate an interest in recording the date of erection of the monuments. In the case of Me.tuwohre that interest was heightened by the fact that the stela was a royal gift. That the stela was set up at Abydos is indicated by its being called a royal offering to Osiris of Abydos, and by the reference to "Khentamenthes at his terrace" in the closing statement. — 2) The entire self-presentation is phrased as a first-person speech in which nominal sentences beginning with *ink* alternate with verbal sentences employing first-person verb forms. Compare this with the third-person self-presentation of the steward Henu (No. 21). One sees how the scribes explored the possible forms of self-presentation. The first-person form reaches its peak in the reign of Sesostri I, most notably in stela BM 581 = No. 47. Also deserving of note is how scribe and sculptor here worked closely together on the layout, so that the introduction occupies three horizontal lines at the top and the speech fills sixteen vertical columns precisely aligned to fill the whole width under the horizontal lines. — 3) The term is *mds bi(3)t*. — 4) The precise meaning of *p3w* has not been established. — 5) Note the assonances of *h'w* and *h3w*. — 6) Note the phrase "at his terrace" (*r rd.f*) and that *rd* here has the house determinative.

## 45-47. Three Stelae of the Chamberlain Intef son of Sent

From Abydos  
BM 572, 562 & 581  
Sesostris I, year 39

Deriving from the spoils of the Anastasi collection, the three stelae must have stood together within one Abydene chapel, for they are closely similar in style and interdependent in their texts. The tall BM 572 will have occupied a central position. Beginning with the regnal date, its text focuses on the courtier's exalted career, describes his functions and lauds his performance.

Of BM 562 only the lower part is extant, amounting to about two-thirds of the stone. Its inscription provides the owner's moral profile in a prayerful recital of his virtues and good deeds, all told without reference to his official position.

BM 581 rounds it off by a hymn to the hallowed ground of Abydos, which now harbors his memorial, and a self-laudation phrased as a first-person speech of twenty sentences, each beginning with *ink*, "I am/was".

The relief scenes, too, are complementary. BM 572 has an offering-table scene joining Intef and his parents, and the two narrow registers below it are filled with family members. In BM 562 Intef stands in the lower left corner, leaning on a staff, and in BM 581 he stands in the upper left corner facing his consecration hymn.

### 45. BM 572

Piehl, *Inscriptions III*, xii-xiii; HT II, 22; Simpson, *Terrace*, ANOC 5.1, pl. 12. Franke, *Personendaten*, Dossier 138.

A tall, delicately carved limestone rectangle, 109.2 x 45.7 cm. The fourteen-line text fills the upper half. The lower half has the relief scenes in three registers.

(1) Year 39 under the majesty of Horus *Ankh-mesut*, the Good God, Lord of the Two Lands, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Son of Re *Senwosret*, given life forever.

(2) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris, lord of Busiris, Khentamenthes great god, lord of Abydos : a voice-offering of bread and beer and 1000 beef and fowl (3) to the honored Chamberlain (*mr-'hnwty*) Intef.

Usher of magnates of Upper Egypt,  
who presents them prostrate in (4) the prince-vizier's hall,  
submits (cases) for adjudgement at the hearing of duties,

and is mighty to punish one slack in (5) his service.<sup>1</sup>  
 Who explains to the querulous<sup>2</sup> and instructs the officials  
 in the hall of (6) the cattle tax,  
 of whom is said, "Await his coming"<sup>3</sup>  
 by those in any half-month jobs.  
 Attentive to (7) one busy with tasks,  
 and given thanks for the success  
 of inspection made long by sacred cows  
 in the presence of the great council.<sup>4</sup>  
 One stands and sits (8) by my goodness,  
 for I am a servant beloved;  
 I was granted to reach old age,  
 with my children holding office in (9) the palace.  
 Controller of works in Upper Egypt,  
 who knows the legal course of action,  
 and is wise in judging between two men.  
 (10) Uniquely skillful, excellent of counsel,  
 who heeds the words of those who know their speech,  
 who is sent because deemed worthy,<sup>5</sup>  
 (11) who gives his account to the judge,  
 'knowing the turn of the heart's concern'.<sup>6</sup>  
 Praised by his chiefs known in the lord's house,  
 (12) whose heart conducts his affairs,  
 who bends his arm to his superiors,  
 and is beloved by the king's courtiers.  
 (13) A famed name as a knower of things,  
 who follows the path without swerving,  
 who hears the word in the chapel (14) of Geb,  
 privy to the secrets of the judgment hall –  
 the honored Chamberlain Intef son of Sent.

#### Notes

1) Read '3 *snk kni hr wnwtf*; *kni* (Wb. V, 131) is here spelled *ink*. Much of the text is difficult and the copy in HT II has faults. With lines 4-7 I had substantial help from P. Kaplony whom I consulted. — 2) What is written as *šntw* is perhaps a contamination of *šni*, "ask", and *šnt*, "quarrel". — 3) On *s3w iwt.f* see p. 77, n. 11. — 4) *Spd-ib* and 'š3 *irw* are unusual terms. As for *sw3ḥ m3w m wrwt*, the meaning seems to be that assessing the cattle tax took extra long when sacred cows were included in the inspection because they were dealt with in a special way. — 5) On *h3b n mnḥf hr ib* see p. 76 with n. 11. — 6) *Rḥ phr n wnwnt m ib*; cf. *rḥ phr m swn ddt* in No. 47, line 7.



## 46. BM 562

Piehl, *Inscriptions III*, xiii-xiv; HT II, 24; Simpson, *Terrace*, ANOC 5.3, pl. 12.

The lower part of a rectangular limestone stela, now measuring 59.7 x 49.5 cm. There are fifteen lines of text, and in the lower left corner is the standing figure of Intef leaning on a staff.

(x) -----

(1) ..... on my stelae.<sup>1</sup>

(2) May the nobles who shall pass by speak,  
may they give me spirithood (3 $\bar{h}$ ),  
that I may live by the breath people give;  
reviving (3) my name makes them gods in a potent hereafter,  
and the *ba* is content when they make it remembered.

I endowed myself (4) for after-years,  
I labored at what would serve me;  
he who can<sup>2</sup> may imitate what I did for me :  
(5) reaching the limits of knowledge of things.

I set my goodness before my household,  
love of me pervaded the whole land;  
(6) I 'blackened'<sup>3</sup> no man to his master  
in order to seek favor<sup>4</sup> with a potentate.  
I gave bread to the hungry, beer to the thirsty,  
(7) I ferried one I found stranded.

I quickened the pace under royal command  
and partook (8) of praises :<sup>5</sup>

"Man of rightness toward people,  
straight in conduct to the learner,<sup>6</sup>  
whence the people (9) say of him,  
'were the land full of his likes' !"<sup>7</sup>

I say (10) this to the members of my estate :  
I have buried the old, clothed (11) the naked,  
I committed no crime against people –  
a thing hateful (12) to the god –<sup>8</sup>

I did the justice desired by the king.

I came to<sup>9</sup> my town,

I descended (13) from my nome,  
having done what people love and gods (14) favor.

It was his majesty the King of Upper and Lower Egypt *Kheperkare* Son  
of Re *Senwosret*, ever living, (15) who placed me among his courtiers<sup>10</sup> –  
the honored Chamberlain Intef son of Sent.

## Notes

1) The word 'b' means both stela and offering stone, and the meaning "stelae" is suitable here. Mentuwsre (No. 44) also called his stela 'b'. — 2) The passage was mistranslated by Kees, Totenglauben<sup>2</sup>, 284, and *qn* here merely means "being able to". — 3) The meaning of *qr*, spelled without determinative, is obscure. Janssen, Autobiografie II, 192(44) proposed a derivation from *qrr*, "brand" (Wb. V, 61) in the sense of "blacken". — 4) Rather than postulating an unknown root *f'r*, I read *d'r*, "to seek". The flattened shape of the cobra (hieroglyph I.10) recurs on BM 581 (No. 47) cols. 7 & 8 and BM 561 (No. 49) line 14 (cf. p. 116, n. 6). In all these instances the cobra rightly lacks the horns that belong to the horned-viper hieroglyph *f* (I.9); only here in BM 562 there is a faint indication of incipient horns, which I take to be a stone-cutter's blunder. As for *d'r* construed with the preposition *n*, it agrees with the meanings listed in Wb. V, 540, c & e, "seek to be useful", etc. — 5) The same phrase as in No. 31, of Wepwawet-aa, see p. 76 with n. 7. — 6) Reading '*q3 m sbi n sb3(w)*'. Janssen, Autobiografie II, 26 top also considered reading '*q3 ms n sb3*'. — 7) *H3 i3 mḥ m mitw.f*, a proverbial saying which recurs on the Edfu stela of prince *Hnsw-m-W3st* (Helck, 2. Zwischenzeit, p. 42, line 6) where the scribe forgot the verb *mḥ*. — 8) Another of the many moral clichés which Intef shares with Wepwawet-aa (No. 31, p. 76). While all these are from the stock of Middle Kingdom moralizing phrases, the number of shared sentences on the stelae of these two men is so considerable as to suggest a connection. — 9) In using this ancient formula — *ii.n.i m niwt.i h3.n.i m spt.i* — the scribe changed *m niwt.i* to *r niwt.i* — an error? or a deliberate change so as to indicate the coming to the holy city of Abydos? — 10) Yet another phrase shared with stela No. 31, 1. 7 (p. 76).

## No. 47. BM 581

HT II, 23; Sethe, Les., no. 20, pp. 80f.; Simpson, Terrace, ANOC 5.2, pl. 12. Lichtheim, AEL I, 120-123; Spiegel, Götter, 131-137.

A rectangular limestone stela, 66 x 36.8 cm., carved in the same delicate style as the other two. The carving style, it seems to me, is closely similar to that of the Munich stela of Wepwawet-aa (No. 32), while the literary affinities of Intef are with the Leiden stela of Wepwawet-aa (No. 31), as we have noted. The stela is divided in three registers. In the uppermost, Intef stands on the left with one arm raised toward his seven-line consecration text. The two lower registers each have ten text columns of identical length, all beginning with the word *ink*, "I am/was". We have encountered this form of self-presentation in the stela of Mentuwsre (No. 44) and noted there that it flourished in the reign of Sesostri I (p. 105). It reaches its culmination on this stela of Intef son of Sent, in a visual and verbal symmetry which could go no further. The text paints the portrait of the perfect civil servant who is controlled, calm, patient, friendly, concerned, generous, candid yet discreet, wise, skilled, and loyal. As a catalog of virtues it would also be a suitable

declaration to be made before the divine tribunal, and Spiegel, loc. cit. surmised it to be an anticipation in positive terms of the "negative confessions" of BD 125.

The consecration text, which precedes the self-laudation, is a poetic and fervent praise of the hallowed ground of Abydos, upon which Intef has now built his monument, called 'h't – by all indications a cenotaph.

*Consecration Text (lines 1-7)*

- (1) Kissing the ground to Khentamenthes,  
seeing the beauty of Wepwawet  
(2) by the Chamberlain Intef, he says :  
Now as for this chapel ('h't),  
I made (it) (3) in the desert of Abydos –  
this island of refuge,  
rampart ordained (4) by the All-Lord,  
seat blessed since the time of Osiris,  
settled by Horus (5) for the forbears,  
served by the stars in heaven,  
mistress of mankind,  
(6) to whom the great of Busiris come,  
peer of On in (7) blessedness,  
whereon the All-Lord-rests –  
A voice-offering for the honored Chamberlain Intef son of Sent.

*Self-Presentation (cols. 1-20)*

- (1) I am silent with the angry, polite with the ignorant,  
so as to quell strife.  
(2) I am cool, free of haste, one who knows the issue, foresees the  
outcome.  
(3) I am a speaker<sup>1</sup> in situations of strife<sup>2</sup>, one who knows which word  
causes anger.  
(4) I am friendly when I hear my name to him who would tell me his  
heart's concern.  
(5) I am controlled, pleasant, friendly, one who calms the weeper with  
good words.  
(6) I am one generous<sup>3</sup> to his client, one helpful to his equal.  
(7) I am a straight one in his lord's house, who knows flattery when it is  
spoken (*rḥ phr m sw n ddt*).  
(8) I am generous, open-handed (*3w-drt*), rich in food, not stingy.<sup>4</sup>  
(9) I am a friend of the poor, well-meaning to the have-not.  
(10) I am one who feeds the hungry in need, one open-handed to the pauper.  
(11) I am a knower for him who lacks knowledge, who teaches a man what  
is useful to him.  
(12) I am a straight one in the king's house, who knows what to say in

- every office.
- (13) I am a listener who hears the truth 'and passes over what seems false'.<sup>5</sup>
  - (14) I am one pleasing to his lord's house, one remembered for his good qualities.
  - (15) I am kindly in the offices, one patient (*w3ḥ-ib*), free of ...<sup>6</sup>
  - (16) I am kindly, not short-tempered, not one who attacks a man for a remark.
  - (17) I am accurate like the scales, straight and true like Thoth.
  - (18) I am firm-footed, excellent of counsel, faithful to his benefactor.
  - (19) I am a knower who taught himself knowledge, who consults so as to be consulted.<sup>7</sup>
  - (20) I am a speaker in the hall of justice, skilled in speech in situations of anxiety.<sup>8</sup>

#### Notes

1) *Mdww*, here and in 1.20, is a "speaker" who intercedes and conciliates, like German "Fürsprecher". — 2) *Swt-ḏnd*, and in 1.20 *swt ḥns-ib*, show that not only was the singular, *st*, "place", used to create abstractions, but the plural, too, could transform concrete "places" into abstract "situations". — 3) Lit. "bright-faced" (*ḥd-ḥr*). — 4) Lit. "free of face-veiling" (*šw m ḥbs-ḥr*). — 5) The translation of *sw3w3 isst ḥr ib* is uncertain, owing to the unknown *isst*. — 6) For the unknown *rrit* Faulkner, Dict. 151 guesses "piggishness". — 7) The same two sentences occur on stela Leiden V 6 (No. 48), see p. 113 with n. 8. — 8) On *swt-ḥns-ib* see n. 2 above.

### 48. Stela of the Overseer of Districts Intef

From Abydos  
Leiden V 6 = No. 4  
Amenemhet II, year 9

Piehl, Inscriptions III, xxiiiA-xxivB; Boeser, Beschr. II, no. 4, pl. III. Spiegel, Götter, 125-127.

A tall rectangular limestone stela with cornice, 119 x 57 cm., of unrecorded provenience but certainly from Abydos. The text covers the upper half of the surface in sixteen lines, with line 1, the regnal date, written on the rim of the cornice, above the cavetto design. On either edge of the stone is a text column containing the adoration formula. The lower half has three registers. The first shows Intef and his wife seated before offerings and receiving more gifts from two sons. The second register has a similar scene with Intef's parents. In the bottom register additional male and female

relatives bear offerings.

(1) Year 9 under the majesty of Horus *Heken-em-maat*, Two Ladies *Heken-em-maat*, King of Upper and Lower Egypt *Nebkaure*.

*Consecration Text*<sup>1</sup>

(2) The honored Overseer of 'Districts' (*mr hrp*)<sup>2</sup> Intef says :

I made this *m'h't*  
on the birthplace<sup>3</sup> of Abydos,  
sacred land of the western desert,  
ground great of (3) fame,  
(where) are transfigured those in their tombs –<sup>4</sup>  
that I may be mighty and effective<sup>5</sup>  
in the following of Khentamenthes,  
lord of Busiris, ruler of Abydos,  
to whom is brought what is and is not.<sup>6</sup>  
May Mehun extend hands (5) with offerings  
that went up before the great god  
in the course of every day.<sup>7</sup>

*Appeal to the Living and Offering Formula*

O you who are alive on earth,  
(6) who wish their children to live,  
your town god shall favor you if you say,  
(7) 1000 bread and beer, 1000 beef and fowl  
for the honored Overseer of 'Districts' Intef, justified,  
man of honor, born of Renef-ankh.

(8) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris, lord of Busiris, Khentamenthes great god, lord of (9) Abydos, in all his good and pure places, that he may give a voice-offering of 1000 beef, 1000 fowl, (10) 1000 alabasters, 1000 clothing, 1000 of everything on which a god lives, to the *ka* of the honored Overseer of Districts, (11) Intef, justified and honored, born of Renef-ankh, justified and honored.

*Self-Laudation*

{ 12} Speech of the Overseer of 'Districts' Intef :

I am a knower who taught himself to know,  
who consults so as to be (13) consulted.<sup>8</sup>  
White-robed feast watcher with (14) his brothers,  
lucky with crops, happy at 'harvest',<sup>9</sup>  
generous, free of (15) meanness,<sup>10</sup>  
shining at dinner, happy at breakfast,  
lord of food, free of stinginess.<sup>11</sup>

A voice-offering (16) for the honored Overseer of Districts Intef,

justified and honored, born of Renef-ankh, (and for) his beloved wife Imem.

*Vertically, right* : Kissing the ground to Wepwawet at the first procession by the honored Overseer of 'Districts' Intef, justified, man of honor.

*Vertically, left* : Kissing the ground to Khentamenthes at the great procession by the honored Overseer of 'Districts' Intef.

### Notes

1) The wording of the consecration text is identical with that of the stela BM 567 (= No. 49, see pp. 115-116 and n. 7). — 2) The precise meaning of *hrp*, with determinative N. 23, has not been established, see Faulkner, Dict. 196 (with reference to JEA 38, 18, n. 2, where Gardiner wrote, "the exact technical meaning is unknown") "district"(?), "estate"(?). — 3) We have noted that the term *msht*, "birthplace", applied to Abydos, had a predecessor in the word *msprt*, used in the 11th dynasty stela of Nakhty (No. 26, see p. 68, n. 3). As Spiegel, Götter, 125 suggested, calling it "birthplace" brings out the role of Abydos as the place of "rebirth" of the dead, who there become transfigured spirits, as is said in line 3; see next note. — 4) *Wrt '3t hmhm s3h.tw hntyw isw.sn*. Three notes are called for: a) Regarding the "ground great of fame" we noted (pp. 88 & 92) that the meaning might be somewhat more inclusive than that of "ground of offerings"; now this is a case where the term suggests not only the burial grounds but also the temple area, or Abydos as such (cf. Spiegel, WZKM 54, 1957, 197ff.). b) The scribe wrote *s3h.tw*, and in the identical phrase on the stela BM 567 (No. 49) *s3h.tw* is written. c) *hntyw isw.sn* can be "in their tombs", or "before their tombs". The use of *is*, "tomb", here following close on *m'h't* suggests the particular equivalence of the two terms: either place was the home of the transfigured spirit (*3h*). — 5) Read: *n mryt wsr(.i) 3h(.i)*. — 6) On *inw n.f ntt iwt* see p. 97, n. 7. — 7) A variant of the Abydos Formula sentence no. 17. — 8) The same pair of sentences as in No. 47 (p. 111, line 19) here with the variant *r rh* instead of *rh*. — 9) It is probable that *w3d sk3w* meant being blessed with good crops, and *nfr 'bb* is likely to have a parallel meaning, though surely not Faulkner's "use the pitchfork" (Dict. 41), an activity not befitting a white-robed gentleman. The epithet *nfr 'bb* occurred on the stela of Rediu-Khnum (No. 18) in an obscure context, and *'bb* is there spelled without determinatives while here it has horn and arm (F. 16 & D. 42). Rediu-Khnum called himself *rh 'h'w.f rwd htm nfr 'bb* (see pp. 42 & 44, n. 2), a sequence which suggests a dignified bearing and appearance. Intef's epithets, however, focus on his wealth and generosity. Thus, *nfr 'bb* is not necessarily the same epithet in both cases, and the dictionary entries for the roots *'b* and *'bb* are bewilderingly vague. — 10) *Wsh ib šwy m hns-ib*, "wide-hearted, free of narrow-heartedness". In No. 47 (p. 111, line 20) we had *swt hns-ib*, where *hns-ib* meant "anxiety"; in short, the concrete "narrow-heartedness" yielded the abstractions "anxiety" and "meanness". — 11) *Hbs-hr*, "face-covering".

## 49-50. Two Stelae of the Storehouse Overseer Amenemhet

From Abydos  
BM 567 & Cairo 20040  
Amenemhet II, year 13

Being similar in shape, size, and carving style, the stelae must have formed a pair. Carved in relatively thick relief, their owner stands in the lower left and lower right corner, respectively. BM 567, the larger of the two, has the leading role. It starts with the regnal date, continues with the full version of the Abydos Formula, and ends with Consecration text and Adoration formula. Cairo 20040 has a series of afterlife wishes that are not drawn from the standard Abydos formula but seem to be variants of it. They are followed by an appeal for offerings addressed to the personnel of the Osiris temple. Neither stela has an autobiographical text; but an elaborately carved offering stone (Simpson's ANOC 13.3) repeats Amenemhet's titulary several times and tells the reader that he built his "monument" (*mnw*) "at the terrace of Khentamenthes" and at that of Wepwawet. As on the stela of Mentuwsre (No. 44) the word "terrace" (*rd*) has the house determinative.

### 49. BM 567

HT II, 5; Simpson, Terrace, ANOC 13.2, pl. 22. Spiegel, Götter, 29, 64, 82f.; Franke, Personendaten, Dossier no. 74.

A round-topped limestone stela, 104 x 63.5 cm. The text in twenty-four lines and three columns fills the surface except for the lower left corner where Amenemhet stands facing right.

(1) Year 13 under the majesty of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt  
(2) *Nebkaure*, given life for ever and ever. An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris, lord of (3) Busiris, Khentamenthes, Lord of Abydos, (to) Wepwawet, foremost of Abydos, (4) (to) Heket and Khnum (and to) all the gods of Abydos, that they may give a voice-offering of bread, beer, beef, fowl, alabaster, clothing, and every good thing that goes up (5) before the great god.

#### *Abydos Formula*

- 1 May hands be stretched to him with offerings on the feasts of the necropolis together with the followers of Osiris, the ancestors who were before.<sup>1</sup>
- 2 May he be transfigured<sup>2</sup> (6) by the great of Busiris (and) the entourage in Abydos.

- 3 May he open the ways he wishes (7) with offerings and food.<sup>3</sup>
- 4 May those in Tawer exalt him, the priests of the great god.
- 5 May hands be given him in the *neshmet*-bark on the ways of the west.
- 6 May he ply<sup>4</sup> the oars in (8) the night-bark,
- 7 May he sail in the day-bark.
- 8 May "welcome in peace" be said to him by the great of Abydos.
- 9 May he travel with the great god when (9) the god fares to Ro-Pequer, the great *neshmet*-bark holding its course, on the feasts of the necropolis.
- 10 May the Bull-of-the-west (10) transfigure him when he joins him at his oars.
- 11 May he hear jubilation from the mouth of Tawer <at> the Haker of the night of vigil, (11) the vigil of Horus-the-fighter.
- 12 May he tread the good ways at the entry of the western lightland.
- 13 May (12) Khnum and Heket transfigure him, the ancestors who rose before on the birthplace of Abydos, who came from the mouth of Re himself when Abydos was sanctified.
- 14 (13) May they give him pure offerings together with<sup>5</sup> the followers of Osiris.
- 15 May he in Tawer acclaim him, may Osiris advance (14) his seat before the great in the sacred land.
- 16 May he abound in offerings and provisions<sup>6</sup>, the offerings presented to Osiris on (15) the Wag-feast, the Thoth-feast, the Flame-feast, the New Year's feast, and all the feasts performed for the great god.
- 17 May Mehun stretch (16) his hand to him with offerings from the great god.
- 18 May he sit down on the right of Osiris before the august nobles.
- 19 May he reach the great god, may he follow him on all his pure ways.
- 20 May he receive things from (18) the great altar daily – the Overseer of the Storehouse (*mr-šn'w*) Amenemhet, man of honor.

*Consecration Text*<sup>7</sup>

He says :

I made (19) this *m'h't*  
 on the birthplace of Abydos,  
 sacred land (20) of the western lightland,  
 ground great of fame,  
 (where) are transfigured (21) those in their tombs,  
 that I may be mighty and effective  
 in the following of Khentamenthes,  
 lord of Busiris, ruler of Abydos,  
 to whom comes what is and is not.  
 May Mehun<sup>8</sup> extend hands with offerings  
 that went up before the great god



in the course of every day.  
O you who are alive on earth,  
who wish their children to live !<sup>9</sup>

*Adoration text*

Kissing the ground to Khentamenthes at the great procession,  
giving praise to Hathor, chieftainess of the desert,  
mistress, lady of the Upper Houses,<sup>10</sup>  
by the honored overseer of the storehouse, Amenemhet.

**Notes**

1) Here begins the Abydos Formula in its full version; compare with No. 36 (Louvre C 3) and with the partial versions of Nos. 32 and 40. This second full version has a number of variations and some errors. — 2) The scribe wrote *s3h tw* instead of *s3h sw*. — 3) This variant — *m htp hn' df3w* instead of *m htp m htp* — looks like a misunderstanding. — 4) The ideographic spelling of *qsr* with arm holding wand (D. 45) is common (Wb. V, 609ff.) but here we have it spelled *qr* with simple arm (D. 41) and again as *sqr* in l. 12, hence faulty in both instances. — 5) on *hn'* replacing *m-* see p. 88, n. 11. — 6) On the flattened shape of the *q*-serpent see p. 109, n. 4. — 7) Except for small variations, the consecration text is identical with that of Leiden V 6 (No. 48), see p. 113, n. 1. — 8) Instead of writing *Mhwn ms'wy* as on Leiden V 6, where *Mhwn* is written with the child ideogram only, the scribe wrote a senseless *m ms'wy*. This can be explained as a misreading of the hieratic child ideogram, which does not look very different from the hieratic *m*-owl. If so, the Consecration text of BM 567 was copied directly from the hieratic copy of Leiden V 6. For further evidence that this was indeed so see next note. — 9) Here begins the version of the Appeal to the Living which on the stela Leiden V 6 follows after the Consecration text, but in BM 567 lacks its sequel because scribe and sculptor had reached the bottom of the stone ! The text could not be continued in the vertical space before the standing figure of Amenemhet, because that space had evidently been reserved for the Adoration text. — 10) The meaning of the designation "upper houses" is unclear; cf. Spiegel, *Götter*, 64, and Hodjash-Berlev, Pushkin Museum, p. 93, n. *ad*. See also Spiegel, *ibid.*, on the fairly prominent role of Hathor in the cult of Abydos.

**50. Cairo 20040**

Mariette, *Cat. d'Abyd.*, no. 711; Lange-Schäfer, *Grabsteine I*, p. 50; Simpson, *Terrace*, ANOC 13.1, pl. 23. Spiegel, *Götter*, 66f., 74f., & 88.

A round-topped limestone stela with a broken top, so that line 1 is unreadable and line 2 incomplete. It now measures 90 x 54 cm. The inscription, which begins in the broken lunette, consists of twelve lines, of which the last four are shorter so as to leave space on the right side for the

standing figure of Amenemhet. Furthermore, lines 7-8 are divided in the middle, with their right-hand halves forming the end of the text in lines 1-6, while their left-side halves (arranged vertically) form the beginning of the second text which continues in the short lines 9-12. The two left-hand halves of lines 7-8 are here numbered 7a-8a.

The first text consists of afterlife wishes in formulations that are related to, but differ from, the standard Abydos formula. The second text is an appeal for offerings addressed to the priests of the Osiris temple.

(1) ----- (2) Osiris. May I see Wepwawet when he arises as god -----  
 (3) ... when he makes festive the basins of the temple.<sup>1</sup>

May Mehun extend his hand to me when he supplies the altars (4) of the blessed.

May I hear their jubilation as the rebel is punished<sup>2</sup> at the procession of the *sem*-priest.

(5) May I be spirit among spirits on the night of *Haker* (6) when the northern Horus is seen.<sup>3</sup>

May I follow him as southern Horus, when Nut the Great is adored, the eye of Re, (7) seen as the greatest of cows<sup>4</sup> — (8) the honored overseer of the storehouse, Amenemhet.

(7a-8a, cols.) He says :

O every count and chief priest,

every seal-bearer of the god,

every temple scribe, every lector-priest,

every phyle chief, every common priest,<sup>5</sup>

(9) who shall be in this temple of Osiris (10) Bull-of-Tawer :

As you love Wepwawet, your (11) lovable god,<sup>6</sup>

you shall say, 1000 of bread, beer, beef, fowl

for the honored overseer of the storehouse, Amenemhet, justified.

### Notes

1) In the Lange-Schäfer copy, the first word of line 3 is given as *šn* with bread-roll determinative (X.4). What I see on Simpson's pl. 23 looks like *šntt*. Whatever that may mean, it is followed by *šhb.fmrw wryt*, where I take *mrw* to be water-holding vessels (Wb. II, 97.9) and *wryt* a name for the sanctuary (Wb. I, 332.13). — 2) Emend *hnw.sn <n>ik sbi*, an allusion to the slaying of the Sethian enemies during the Osiris mysteries. — 3) In the Lange-Schäfer copy, the last word of line 5 is *m33* with hieroglyph G. 1; what I see is *m3w* with quail chick G. 43. In any case, there is no first-person suffix, wherefore I question Spiegel's rendering, "Möge ich den nördlichen Horus sehen" (Götter, 66 & 74). Lange-Schäfer also failed to note that the "northern Horus" is misspelled with hieroglyph G.1 instead of G. 5. — 4) Spiegel (Götter, 88) rendered : "Möge ich Nut, die Grosse, das Auge des Re, verehren, wenn sie erblickt wird als grösste der Kühe." Observe, however, that *dw3* has no first-person suffix. - As for the "northern and southern Horus", it refers to the

roles of the reigning king in the performance of the Osiris mysteries. — 5) *Hm-nr* 'š3 is "common priest", just as *rmf* 'š3 is "common man", as is quite evident in the Instructions of Ankhsheshonqi and PInsinger; see also Quaegebeur in Fs Fecht, 376. — 6) That the couchant jackal is Wepwawet, not Anubis, is proved by the parallel phrase in CG 20538, rt.5, where the god's name is spelled out.

## 51-53. Three Stelae of the Commander Imeny

From Abydos  
Louvre C 35, BM 162, Cairo 20546  
Reign of Amenemhet II(?)

The three stelae were discussed by Simpson, Terrace, pp. 14-15, as the paradigm of an Abydene family chapel assembled on the basis of family names, style, and Abydene ritual texts. (The fourth stela, his ANOC 2.4, which he added with doubts, does not belong, as was made clear by Berlev in his review, BiOr 33, 325). Having come from Mariette's excavations, the Abydene provenience of Cairo 20546 is known, and that of BM 162 follows from its being carved in an identical and matching style. The tall and very different looking Louvre C 35 may have formed the center piece.<sup>1</sup>

### 51. Louvre C 35

Simpson, Terrace, ANOC 2.1, pl. 5. Spiegel, Götter, 150-152; Franke, Personendaten, Dossier no. 100.

A round-topped stela of gray granite, 111 x 47.5 cm. The text in seven lines begins below the lunette, which is blank. It continues in three long columns on the right and three short columns on the left. The central space is occupied by the standing figures of Imeny and his wife Itet, facing right.

The horizontal inscription consists of an Adoration text, combined with elements of the Abydos Formula. The columns on the right add an offering formula.

(1) Giving praise to Osiris Khentamenthes, (2) lord of Abydos, at the great procession. Seeing his beauty at the *Wag*-feast, (3) on the ground that gives offerings (*w'rt ddt ḥtpt*), at the great portal of *Haker*, whence he goes forth (4) to his feasts of eternity.

May hands be stretched out to me<sup>2</sup> with offerings (5) on the feasts of the necropolis together with the followers of Osiris, and on all feasts (6) celebrated for the great god.

May he give a voice-offering of bread, beer, beef, and fowl to the *ka* of the honored Royal Seal-bearer, (7) the Chief Troop Commander (*mr-mš'*

wr)<sup>3</sup> Imeny, born of Qebu, justified.

(Cols. 1-2) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris, lord of Busiris, great god, lord of Abydos, in all his places, that he may give a voice-offering of bread, beer, beef, fowl, and every good thing to the *ka* of one honored by Anubis, the Royal Seal-bearer and Chief Troop Commander Imeny, justified.

(Cols. 3-5) His beloved wife, his favorite, Itet, justified and honored, born of Sat-imiwer.

#### Notes

1) In his article "Sesostris I" in *LÄ* V, 895, Simpson dated the three stelae to the reign of Sesostris I or Amenemhet II "on stylistic grounds". On these grounds, and particularly on account of the eclectic nature of the texts, the later of the two dates seems the more likely.

— 2) In this context, the rephrasing of Abydos Formula wish no. 1 from the third to the first person is appropriate; see p. 95, n. 2. — 3) That *mr-mš* can mean "foreman" is well established (*JEA* 38, 39), but that *mr-mš wr* could be "chief foreman" rather than "chief troop commander", has, as far as I know, not been proven.

### 52-53. BM 162 and Cairo 20546

The two stelae are a matching pair with an identical design and carved in the same good style. On both stelae a five-line text follows the curve of the unusually rounded top and ends in columns on the right and left edge, respectively. The central section is filled in either case by two standing figures : on BM 162 another wife of Imeny, called Medhu, and a servant, called Sa-Hathor, and on Cairo 20546 a third wife, Renef-ankh, and another servant, Sa-Renenwetet. On both stelae the narrow bottom register is filled by five offering bearers.

The texts, too, are complementary. BM 162 has an offering formula addressed to Osiris, followed by three wishes from the Abydos formula. Cairo 20546 has an offering formula addressed to Anubis, and two sentences alluding to the first and the great procession of the Osiris festival.

Taken together, the three stelae present Imeny in the company of three wives, and sons, daughters, and servants; but other than giving his principal titles they offer no textual autobiography.

## 52. BM 162

HT IV, 33; Simpson, Terrace, ANOC 2.3, pl. 6. Limestone, 117 x 72.4 cm.

(1) An offering-that-the-king-gives to<sup>1</sup> Osiris Khentamenthes, lord of Abydos, in all his good and pure places, (2) that he may give a voice-offering of bread, of beer, of beef and fowl, of everything (3) good, to the *ka* of one honored before the great god, the Chief Troop Commander Imeny, born of Qebu, justified.

(4) May hands be given to him in the *neshmet*-bark on the ways of the west.

May he receive offerings from (5) the great altar on the feasts of the necropolis.

May "welcome in peace" be said to him by the great of Abydos, on the Wag-feast, (cols. 1-3) the Thoth-feast, the Sokar-feast, the procession of Min, the first procession, the first-of-the-year, and all great feasts celebrated for Osiris Khentamenthes, great god, for the *ka* of the Chief Troop Commander Imeny.

## 53. Cairo 20546

Mariette, Cat. d'Abyd. no. 647; Lange-Schäfer, Grabsteine II, 171-173; Simpson, Terrace, ANOC 2.2, pl. 6. Limestone, 115 x 74 cm.

(1) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Anubis upon his mountain, *imy-wt*, lord of the sacred land, presiding over the divine booth, in all his (2) places, that he may give a voice-offering of bread and beer, of beef and fowl, and of everything good and pure whereon a god (3) lives, to the *ka* of the honored Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, Chief Troop Commander Imeny, born of Qebu, (4) at the first procession (and) when the god fares to the district (*hrp*)<sup>2</sup> of Peqer, and at his every travel (5) in Thinite Abydos — to the honored Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, Chief Troop Commander Imeny, justified.

(Cols. 1-2) The Prince, Count, noblest Companion, Magistrate before the people, Chief Troop Commander Imeny.

### Notes

1) For once, the preposition "to" is spelled out, by means of *hr*. — 2) On *hrp* see p. 113, n. 2)

## 54-55. Two Stelae of the Steward Inher-Nakht

From Abydos  
BM 575 and BM 559  
Sesostris III, year 7

Lacking a recorded provenience but certainly from Abydos, the two round-topped stelae exemplify a typical *m'h't* monument of a minor official in the latter part of the 12th dynasty. Crudely carved, and with the biographical content reduced to a minimum, texts and representations concentrate on the essential purpose : participation in the Osirian afterlife. The taller BM 575 presents the main points in a text that fills the upper half. It consists of : 1. Regnal date and self-presentation as a loyal official. 2. Consecration text. 3. Four wishes of the Abydos Formula, directly linked to the Consecration text. In the lower half, two standing figures of the deceased face a central statue niche and are accompanied by brief Adoration texts.

BM 559 adds an offering formula, Inher-nakht's full titulary, and a supplementary Adoration text. It also depicts the man's wife and young son, but without supplying their names.

### 54. BM 575

HT II, 18; Simpson, Terrace, ANOC 43.2, pl. 62. Spiegel, Götter, 120f.; Franke, Personendaten, Dossier no. 151. Limestone, 94 x 48.3 cm.

(1) Year 7 under the majesty of Horus *Khepru-netjer*, (2) Two Ladies *Mesut-netjer*, King of Upper and Lower Egypt *Khakaure*, Son of Re *Senwosret*, given life forever. (3) His true servant whom he favors, who does all he praises in the course of each day, (4) the Steward of the Grain Account (*mr-pr ḥsb it*) Inher-nakht (*Inḥr-nḥt*), justified, says :

I have made this monument (*ir.n.i grt m'h't tn*)

(5) at the terrace of the great god (*r rd n nṯr '3*),

lord of life, foremost in Abydos,

in order to receive food and (6) incense,

divine offerings from the altar of the lord of gods,

and that there be said to me "welcome (7) in peace" by the great of Abydos,

that hands be given me in the *neshmet* (8) bark on the feasts of the necropolis,

that (I) receive the pure offering that has gone before (9) the great god, after his *ka* has been satisfied therewith, on his good and pure ways in the

sacred land,

and that I hear (10) jubilation from the mouth of Tawer on the beautiful night of *Haker* — the Steward of the Grain Account, Inher-nakht, justified.

(*Lower right*) Offering food of cake and white bread to Wepwawet on the first procession by the Steward of the Grain Account Inher-nakht.

(*Lower left*) Seeing the beauty of Khentamenthes and Wepwawet on the great procession by the Steward of the Grain Account, Inhernakht, justified.

## 55. BM 559

HT II, 17; Simpson, Terrace, ANOC 43.1, pl. 62. Sandstone, 85.1 x 38.1 cm.

(1) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris, lord of Busiris, great god, (2) lord of Abydos, that he may give a voice-offering of bread and beer, beef and fowl, alabaster and clothing, and everything good and pure (3) to the *ka* of the Prince, Count, Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, Steward of (4) the Grain Account, Inher-nakht, justified.

(Cols. 1-4) Kissing the ground to Khentamenthes on the great procession, seeing the beauty of Wepwawet on the first procession, by the Steward of the Grain Account, Inher-nakht, justified.

## 56. Stela of the Keeper of the Diadem Nebipusenwosret

From Abydos

BM 101

Reign of Amenemhet III

PM V, 96. HT II, 1-2; Blackman, JEA 21 (1935) 1-9 & pl. 1. Sethe, Les., no. 28i, p. 89 (text C only); Gardiner, Gr., pp. 168f. (text C). Clère, JEA 23 (1937) 261; Goedicke, JNES 22 (1963) 188f.; Franke, Personendaten, Dossier no. 297.

Here we have an excellent example of pilgrimage by proxy. At the northern royal residence, the courtier Nebipusenwosret prepared his Abydene memorial stela and sent it to Abydos in the care of a priest, who with other priests had come to the residence to attend the jubilee feast of the king.

It is a rectangular limestone stela with cavetto cornice and torus molding, measuring 100 x 65 cm., and divided in three registers. The uppermost register has a central panel of eight text columns, flanked on either side by the standing figure of the owner, and framed by an additional text

column (A). In the middle register, Nebipusenwosret is seated on the left before an offering table. A short offering formula is written above the table, and nine text columns fill the right side (B). The bottom register consists of a text in seven lines (C).

#### A

(Center, 1-2) Viewing the beauty of the Good God *Khakaure*, justified, beloved of Osiris Wenen-nofer, lord of Abydos, beloved of Wepwawet, lord of the sacred land.

(Center, left, 3-5) Opened be the sight of the Keeper of the Diadem (*iry nfr-ḥ3t*), the follower of Pharaoh, Nebipusenwosret, that he may see Osiris justified before the Two Enneads, resting in his palace, his heart ever glad. "I am content with it", says the desert (*smt*).

(Center, right, 6-8) Opened be the sight of the Keeper of the Diadem, the follower of Pharaoh, Nebipusenwosret, that he may see the beauty of Wepwawet at his beautiful procession, when he returns in peace to his palace of heart's delight, while the priesthood of the temple rejoices.

(*Back col., left*) Adoring Osiris on his beautiful festivals for ever and ever.

(*Back col., right*) Adoring Wepwawet on the beautiful procession forever and ever.

#### B

(1) Speech of the Keeper of the Diadem, the follower of Pharaoh, Nebipusenwosret (2) justified, who grew up as a child under the feet of the King, a pupil of (3) Horus, lord of the palace :

I have been the Companion who carries the royal (4) foot-stool at the Feast of Years, under the majesty of (5) Horus-the-Mighty.

I have been Chief of the Ten(s) of Upper Egypt (*wr md(.w) šm'w*) and Priest of (6) the Royal Beard (*ḥm-ntr dw3-wr*) at the Jubilee feast, under the majesty of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt (7) *Nemaatre*, ever living.

This stela (*'b' pn*) fared south with (8) the elder lector-priest Ibi, when the temple priesthood (9) had come to see the King at his beautiful feast of eternity.

#### C

(1) The Keeper of the Diadem, the follower of Pharaoh, Nebipusenwosret, says to the priesthood of the temple of Abydos and of his<sup>1</sup> chapels of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt :

The king shall flourish (2) in your life,  
the monuments of your town gods shall endure for you,  
you shall be in the favor of your king,  
you shall hand on (3) your offices to your children,  
your offspring shall abide on your seats in your enduring offices,



you shall not hunger, (4) you shall not thirst —  
 the great god having ordained that you be on earth in his favor —  
 you shall not be imprisoned in (5) a painful place —  
 owing to the favor of your town gods —  
 according as you shall say,  
 An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris,  
 lord of Abydos, great god, Wenenofer,  
 1000 of (6) bread, beer, beef, fowl,  
 a voice-offering at every feast,  
 to the *ka* of the Keeper of the Diadem,  
 the follower of Pharaoh, Nebipusenwosret, born of Ita.  
 Breath of the mouth serves (7) the blessed,  
 and is not a thing that wearies;  
 you shall be as an imperishable star,  
 a star of the thousand-souled.<sup>2</sup>

#### Notes

1) "His" refers to the god Osiris, as was pointed out by Clère, loc.cit. — 2) *h3-b3.s*  
 "thousand are her soul(s)" refers to the star-clad sky-goddess Nut, as was explained by  
 Blackman, op. cit.

### 57. Stela of Sebeksen with Hymn to Osiris

Provenience unrecorded

BM 580

Late 11th/early 12th Dynasty

HT II, 37; Sethe, *Les.*, no. 11b, p. 63; Hassan, *Hymnes*, 122-126.  
 Assmann, *Hymnen*, no. 208, pp. 438f.; Barucq-Daumas, *Hymnes*, no. 7,  
 pp. 83f.

Of unrecorded provenience but certainly from Abydos, this is a  
 horizontal tablet, 48 x 75 cm., divided in two sections. On the left, Sebeksen  
 and his wife are standing before an offering table, and the offering formula is  
 written in two lines above their heads. The man's arms are raised in  
 adoration, indicating his recital of the hymn to Osiris, inscribed in seven  
 columns on the right.

#### *Offering Formula*

(1) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris, lord of Busiris, great  
 god within Abydos : a voice-offering of bread and beer, 1000 beef and fowl,  
 (2) 1000 of everything good and pure, for the honored Count Sebeksen, son

of Beb, justified, and his beloved wife Iy, daughter of Itu, justified.

*Hymn to Osiris*

(1) Giving praise to Osiris,  
kissing earth to Wepwawet,  
when you rise<sup>1</sup>, Wen-en-nofer,  
(2) in your feasts of evermore;  
Lord eternal, king of gods,  
to whom comes what is and (3) is not!<sup>2</sup>

Risen grandly<sup>3</sup>, lord of all men,  
overlord of all the Two-Lands,  
come in peace, lord of gladness!  
(4) Your son Horus is your savior,  
gods attend you with extollings,  
mankind (5) hails your boat's procession.<sup>4</sup>

Risen grandly, lord of the Nine,  
lord of (6) praises, bringer of joy,  
lord of victuals<sup>5</sup>, food provider,  
(7) primeval one whose being lasts,  
tall of standard, white-crown wearer,  
Great God, lord of the west!

**Notes**

- 1) Lit., "when you are made to rise", *sh'.t(w).k* — 2) On *iw n.f ntt iwtt* see p. 97, n. 7. — 3) *H' wr*, "who has risen grandly", is used as the anaphoric beginning of the second and third stanzas, the whole hymn consisting of three stanzas of six lines each. Stanzas 1-2 are transliterated below. — 4) Lit., "mankind hails you as you proceed in the god's boat." — 5) *Hw* is not only "divine utterance" but also "food".

**Stanzas 1-2**

*dit i3w n Wsir*  
*sn t3 n Wp-w3wt*  
*sh'.t(w).k Wnn-nfr*  
*m hbw.k n dt*  
*nb nhh hq3 nfrw*  
*iw n.f ntt iwtt*

*h' wr nb t3-tmw*  
*hry-tp t3wy tmw*  
*ii.wy m htp nb 3wt-ib*  
*s3.k Hr m ndty.k*  
*šms tw nfrw m i3w*  
*sh'y tw hmnt wq3.k m dpt ntr*

## 58. Stela of Wepwawet-Hotep with Hymn to Osiris

Provenience unrecorded

BM 1367

13th Dynasty

HT III, 28; Sethe, *Les.*, no. 11c, pp. 63f.; Hassan, *Hymnes*, 106-122. Assmann, *Hymnen*, no. 207, pp. 437f.; Barucq-Daumas, *Hymnes*, no. 8, pp. 84f. Franke, *Personendaten*, Dossier, no. 207.

Of unrecorded provenience but certainly from Abydos, this is a round-topped limestone stela, 48 x 30 cm. In the lunette, the two magic eyes flank an *ankh* sign. Below is the text in fourteen lines, above and to the right of the standing figure of Wepwawet-hotep, and ending in two columns before and behind his figure.

(1) Adoration of Osiris by the Prince, Count, Royal Seal-bearer, 'Domain' Overseer (*mr gs-pr*)<sup>1</sup> (2) Wepwawet-hotep, justified, son of the Count and Seal-bearer of the God, Khnum-hotep, justified; he says :

(3) Hail Osiris Khentamenthes,  
Son of Nut, heir of Geb, king (4) of gods !  
Who came mighty from his mother's womb,  
and received his father's white-crown.

(5) Staff in hand, scepter in fist,  
he has received the flail.

Of nobler appearance than any god,

(6) lord of awe, great of majesty,  
lord of splendor, great in Hnes,  
with hidden seats in Rosetau.

(7) Whom Thoth loves to see at his seat of (8) rightness<sup>2</sup>,  
for whose sake Re rises to view his beauty (9) on earth,  
and sets in life to see him in the forms of *Dat*.

(10) He has given him his diadems on the great *atef*-crown (11) on his head<sup>3</sup>,

to make the Evil one fear him,

(12) and his comrades fall on their faces to him<sup>4</sup>,

(13) for he loves him more than any god,  
this god, eldest god, King of Egypt (14) *Wsir*, justified<sup>5</sup>.

May I receive offerings of his temple,  
(cols.) those placed on the ground, those going up on the altar<sup>6</sup>;  
May I breathe the air that comes thence,  
imbued with myrrh on the flame,  
may the fragrance of roast meat enter my nose !

### Notes

1) The meanings of *gs-pr* are unclear; Wb. V, 198f. suggests "administration" and different branches of it, while Ward, Index, no. 411 has "administrative district". — 2) Lit. "justification" (*m3'-hrw*). — 3) I.e., Re has added his sun-disk diadems to the *atef*-crown worn by Osiris. — 4) The god Seth and his "gang" (*sm3yt*). — 5) The name of Osiris is written in the royal cartouche and preceded by *nswt-bit*. — 6) So, following Sethe's explanation, Erl., 63.23.

## 59. Stela of Ibia with Hymn to Osiris

From Abydos  
Cairo 20086  
12th/13th Dynasty

Mariette, Cat. d'Abyd., no. 926; Lange-Schäfer, Grabsteine I, 101-103; Hassan, Hymnes, 127-129; Van de Walle, RdE 3 (1938) 91-97. Assmann, Hymnen, no. 209, pp. 439-441; Barucq-Daumas, Hymnes, no. 9, pp. 86-88.

Found in Mariette's excavations of the Northern Cemetery, near the enclosure wall, this is a round-topped limestone stela, 100 x 77 cm., now in very damaged condition. The text in thirteen lines and one column occupies the upper half and is flanked by the standing figures of male and female family members. The lower half is filled by the figures of numerous relatives.

The translators of the hymn have focused on its parallel and longer versions and have omitted the five-line self-presentation which introduces the hymn on this stela. The self-presentation, however, provides a glimpse of the "Sitz im Leben": such hymns were probably sung during the Osirian festivals, but, as usual, it is their being recorded on memorial stelae which gave them their efficacious permanence.

### Self-Presentation

(1) Adoration of Osiris by the Prince, Count, trusty (*mḥ-ib*) of the king in maintaining<sup>1</sup> (2) his monuments, his confidant (*'q-ib*) before the courtiers, whom the king appointed as Overseer of Works of his numerous monuments (*ḥrp k3t ḥr mnw.f n ḥḥ*), (3) who maintains<sup>1</sup> the monuments of the gods in the temples of Tawer, whom the king sent to open up (*wb3*) Kush because he deemed him efficient<sup>2</sup>, who set the power of the Lord of the Two Lands in the midst of rebellious foreign lands, who followed the monuments of (5) the sovereign into 'remote' foreign lands<sup>3</sup>, the Deputy Chief Treasurer (*idnw mr sḏ3t*) Ibia (*Ibi'*) repeater of life, man of honor, says :

*Hymn to Osiris*

Hail (6) Osiris Khentamenthes  
on this good day of his becoming bull<sup>4</sup>  
in this your name (8) of Bull-of-the-West,  
of becoming perfect in your dignity (*s'ḥ*) (9) before the gods  
in this your name of Good God Wenen-nofer !<sup>5</sup>

(10) Lord of gods, good god, who issued from Geb,  
Transfigured one (*s3ḥ*) who came (11) from his mother Nut's womb,  
Great Chief (*wr '3*) of his mother Nut's (12) womb,  
of whom the gods are in awe  
when his good feasts are performed (13) with the gods.

For whom his sister Isis acted,  
for whom his son Horus was placed on (14) his throne,  
to whom Geb gave his goodly inheritance  
and vindication by all the gods —  
Arise Osiris !<sup>6</sup>

Notes

1) *Smnḥ mnw*, here and again in line 3, suggests that this "Overseer of Works" was in charge of the maintenance of buildings and cult objects, that is to say, there may have been an understanding that the proper response to natural decay was maintenance, rather than rebuilding and refashioning what had been allowed to go to ruin. — 2) On *mnḥ.f ḥr ib* see p. 77, n. 5. — 3) An allusion to the export of royal objects ? — 4. Mariette copied *k33.n.f* with an emphatic *sic*, and the Rio de Janeiro parallel text has *k3.n.f*; hence the *k3m.n.f* of Lange-Schäfer is a mistake. — 5) Parallel to the word play on *k3* and *k3-mwt.f* is the play on *wnn nfr* as a verb and *Wenen-nofer* as a name of Osiris. For once, the meaning "perfect" for *nfr* is suitable; in most cases, the conventional rendering "good/beautiful" is better than the various proposals for truer rendering that have been made. — 6) The closing phrase, "Arise, Osiris" (*ʿs ṯw Wsir*) is the anaphoric beginning of the three stanzas that follow in the long version of the hymn on the 18th dynasty stela Turin 1640. Here in the Cairo text it makes an effective conclusion, but it is quite possible that the longer version already existed in the Middle Kingdom. For the "rising" motif compare also the stela of Sebeksen, No. 57.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

Our three-pronged examination of Abydene private stelae calls for some concluding observations.

**4.1** We have traced the growth of the *Abydos Formula* since its appearance on biographical stelae of 11th dynasty date and have found that it culminated, in the first half of the 12th dynasty, on Abydene private stelae in a standardized sequence of twenty afterlife wishes. We then noted that the common practice was to record portions of the Abydos Formula rather than the whole, and to introduce variations in their order and in their phrasing. We also observed a growing tendency to integrate the Abydos Formula wishes with the Offering Formula or with a Consecration text.

The stelae containing Abydos Formula wishes that have been surveyed are the following :

Versions of the 11th dynasty : Nos. 19, 22, 23 and 24.

The full version of the 12th dynasty : Nos. 36 and 49.

Major portions of the 12th dynasty version : Nos. 32 and 40.

Minor portions (1-5 sentences) : Nos. 50-54.

Abydos Formula wishes also occur on the following Middle Kingdom stelae not included in this study (the list is not exhaustive!) :

Major portions : CG 20024; CG 20480 = Mariette, Cat. d'Abyd. no. 602 (text in Mariette only!); CG 20516; Leiden V 88 = No. 11.

Minor portions : CG 20005; CG 20088; CG 20552; CG 20561; Berlin 1191 and Leiden V 79 = No. 36; Berlin 1192; Durham 1932; Louvre C 166; Louvre C 177; Munich GL.WAF 31.

**4.2** In studying the Consecration texts with their references to the "terrace of the great/august god", we postponed the discussion of the "terrace" till the end (see p. 92, n. 9). Simpson had given much thought to the identification of the "terrace", and he presented the following tentative conclusion :

"The high ground overlooking the Osiris temple to its east and the wadi to its south may have been considered the terrace of the great god. On this terrace and flanking the roadway would have been constructed the offering chapels from which the stelae of Dynasty 12 and 13 (and also Dynasty 11) derive." (Terrace, p. 9).

Simpson's conclusion has been cited, or adopted, a number of times (Hoffmeier, Sacred, p. 31, cited it; Assmann, Ägypten, p. 216, adopted it), while Spiegel had groped in a different direction :

"Die Gestaltung der 'Treppe des grossen Gottes', die einen zentralen Teil der Tempelanlagen von Abydos gebildet haben muss, ist uns leider nicht mehr rekonstruierbar. Hier war die Masse der Denksteine konzentriert..." (Götter, p. 117).

Some years earlier, Yoyotte had said : "Il est probable que 'Escalier' désigne métaphoriquement le temple" (Pèlerinages, p. 68, n. 49).

The review of pertinent sources that follows here will, I think, settle the question. These sources are of course first of all the Consecration texts, of which we have encountered nine samples, on stelae Nos. 30, 31, 38, 39, 40, 47, 48, 49, and 54, all of the 12th Dynasty, and one example of the 11th Dynasty, No. 26. The last named will be considered last, since it appears to contain a scribal error. Additional ones could be cited but would not change the picture; a number of them were quoted by Simpson, Terrace, pp. 10-13.

No. 30, Leiden V 3 (translation p. 73)

*iw.n.i grt r is pn*  
*r rd n ntr šps*  
*w'rt '3t hmhmt*  
*iḥ m3.i Wpw3wt m ḥbw.f nbw ...*

No. 31, Leiden V 4 (translation p. 76)

*ir is pn ir.n.i m smt nt t3 dsr*  
*m-ḥr-ib itw qm3(w) iw.f.i*  
*s'ḥw nw hrw tpy*  
*nbw mnw m isww i3t*  
*p3w š3'w m irt idb Ḥqt dr rk Gb*  
*ir.n(.i) st r smnh st(.i) m-ḥr-ib.s(n)*  
*sp3t.i grt*

No. 38, Los Angeles (translation p. 91)

*ii.n(.i) m ḥtp r m'ḥ't tn*  
*irt.n(.i) m 3ḥt imntt T3-wr 3bḏw*  
*r st nhḥ nt ḏt*  
*r rd n ntr šps*

No. 39, Berlin 1199 (translation p. 93)

*'ḥ'.n ir.n(.i) m'ḥ't tn*  
*r rd n ntr '3*  
*n mr(w)t wn(.i) m šmsw.f*  
*mš'w imyw ḥt ḥm.f ḥr 3wt ḥt n k3.i*

No. 40, BM 573 (translation p. 95)

*ir.n(.i) gr(t) m'ḥ't tn*  
*ḥr w'rt nbt ḥtpt m T3-wr 3bḏw*  
*iw.i im.s m 3ḏw '3*  
*wnwt ḥt-ntr 'wy.sn ḥr ḥtpt prt m ntr '3 ...*

[No. 47, BM 581 (p. 110) not a typical Consecration text.]

No. 48, Leiden V 6 (translation p. 112)

*ir.n.i gr(t) m'h't tn*  
*hr mshnt nt 3bḏw*  
*t3 ḏsr n smt imntt*  
*w'rt '3t hmhmt*  
*s3h.tw hntyw isw.sn*  
*n mryt wsr(.i) 3h(.i)*  
*m šmsw Hnty-imntiw*  
*nb ḏḏw ḥq3 3bḏw*  
*inw n.f ntt iwt*

No. 49, BM 567 (translation p. 115)

Text identical with that of No. 48 except for minor variants, e.g. *t3 ḏsr 3ht imntt* instead of *t3 ḏsr n smt imntt*

No. 54, BM 575 (translation p. 121)

*ir.n.i grt m'h't tn*  
*r rd n nṯr '3*  
*nb 'nh hnt 3bḏw*  
*n mr(w)t šsp '3bwt snṯr*  
*ḥtpw nṯr hr wdḥw n nb nṯrw ...*

Observe the consistent distinction between *r rd n nṯr '3* (or *šps*) and *hr w'rt nbt ḥtp* (and variants) : the monuments are said to be erected "on the ground" (of offerings) and "at the stairway/terrace". This distinction between "on" and "at" — because it is made consistently — is crucial for the understanding. In discussing the meaning of *w'rt* we noted that the "ground of offerings" is clearly a designation of the cemetery regions, whereas the "ground great of fame" appears to have a wider meaning, embracing the cemeteries, the temple area, and Abydos as a whole (see p. 92). Compare here the *w'rt '3t hmhmt* of No. 30 with that of No. 48 : in No. 30 it stands in apposition to *r rd n nṯr šps*, whereas in No. 48 it stands in apposition to the entire holy region of Abydos, called "birthplace" and "sacred land of the western desert". If thus the epithet "ground great of fame" is inclusive rather than distinctive, it nevertheless remains true that the location of the memorial, when it is indicated, is *always* said to be *on* a ground called *w'rt* and *at* the "terrace", but never "on" the terrace !

When due weight is accorded to this distinction, it emerges that the "terrace of the great god", far from having been a hill-and-vale region of the cemeteries adjoining the processional way, was *the Osiris-Wepwawet temple complex or a particular part of it*. To the north-west, south and west of the temple stretched the burial grounds with their massed ranks of tombs, cenotaphs, and single stelae; and, as Simpson has stressed, the majority of



Middle Kingdom stelae extracted from tombs and cenotaphs came from the immediate vicinity of the temple, the area to the south-west of the enclosure wall, known as the "North Cemetery of Mariette". Here stood the stelae — "at" the "terrace of the great god".

Now just as the term "ground great of fame" is an inclusive one, which does not designate a particular area, so also the term *t3 dsr 3 ht imntt*, "sacred land of the western horizon". Its appearance in our 11th Dynasty Consecration text, No. 26, muddles the otherwise clear distinction between "at the terrace", and "on the ground" :

No. 26, Chatsworth (translation p. 67)

*ir.n(.i) is pn r rwd n ntr šps*

*t3 dsr 3 ht imntt*

*hr w'rt rdit htpt*

*msprt nt ntr nb*

*n mrwt wnn(.i) m šmsw Wpw3wt*

As it stands, the phrase "sacred land of the western horizon" appears to be in apposition to the "terrace of the great god". But so used it is senseless. For "sacred land of the western horizon" and its related terms, "sacred land of the western desert" (Nos. 48 & 49) and "western horizon of Thinite Abydos" (No. 38) are all of them comprehensive terms for the Abydene burial grounds and hence not suitable epithets for the "terrace of the august god". It thus appears almost certain that the scribe omitted the preposition *m* before *t3 dsr 3 ht imntt*. If supplied, one obtains the statement that Nakhty built his tomb :

*at the terrace of the august god,*

*<in> the sacred land of the western horizon,*

*on the ground that gives offerings ...*

And that is what we find, correctly phrased, on the stela BM 213 (=HT III, 5) of a 12th dynasty Mentuhotep :

*'h'.n di.n.i m ib.i*

*irt n.i swt nt nhh*

*r rd n ntr '3*

*m t3 dsr n 3bq̄w*

*hr w'rt nbt htpt*

*sn n.i sntr pr hr h3wt*

*m-' šms n Wsir*

*m hbw nw hrt-ntr ...*

I have decided in my heart

to make me a place of eternity

at the terrace of the great god,

in the sacred land of Abydos,

on the ground Mistress-of-offerings,

so as to inhale incense that comes from the altar,

together with the following of Osiris,

at the feasts of the necropolis ...

Furthermore, it is worth repeating that in the lower left corner of stela No. 26, p. 68, the figure of Nakhty has the legend : "Going to the terrace of the necropolis, following the god in his strides" (*sd3t r rwd n hrt-ntr šms ntr r nmtwt.f*), thus envisaging the dead man's going *from* his tomb in the necropolis *to* the "terrace of the necropolis".

This legend is from the store of phrases that describe the purposes of the memorials, such as "seeing" or "following" Osiris or Wepwawet (Nos. 30, 39, 48 & 49) and partaking of offerings that have come from the temple (Nos. 40, 54, & BM 213), including the true delight of inhaling the fragrance of roasting meat (No. 58).

All of this signals the temple as the focus to which the monuments were oriented, not only by their being set close to the temple precinct, but by their textual formulations as well.

Other gods beside the Abydene Osiris had their "terrace". Rediu-Khnum of Dendera (No. 18) had desired to attain his spiritualization (*s3h*) at the hands of the "priests of the august terrace", which is nothing other than the temple of Hathor of Dendera. Thus, the "terrace" of a particular god meant his, or her, temple. A final proof that this is indeed so is found on the Denderite Stela of Prince Ameni, of the time of King Sebekemsaf I (17th Dynasty), two large fragments of which were recovered at Coptos. The left-hand block is in the Petrie Collection, London, the right-hand block in the Pushkin Museum, Moscow. (See the full publication by Hodjash-Berlev, *Pushkin Museum*, no. 41, pp. 86-93 & 2 pls.; also Stewart, *Petrie Coll. II*, no. 79 and pl. 15.2 (line drawing). Helck, 2. *Zwischenzeit*, no. 93, p. 63, has the left-hand block only). The relevant passage reads :

*i 'nhw tpw t3*  
*sš (x+4) nb w'b nb hry-hb nb hm-k3 nb*  
*shdw hmw-ntr nw pr nwb*  
*'qt(y)sn r r-pr pn*  
*(x+5) šdt(y)sn m wd pn*  
*ir.n.i m ht-ntr nt Ht-Hr*  
*rdi.n.i r rwd n nbt iwnt Hr*  
*(x+6) mr.in m33 nfrw Ht-Hr m wi3.s*  
etc.

O you who are alive on earth,  
every scribe, every *web*-priest, every lector-priest and *ka*-priest,  
and inspectors of the priests of the House of the Gold,  
who shall enter into this temple,  
and shall read from this stela,  
which I made in the temple of Hathor,  
and placed at the terrace of the Lady of Dendera and of Horus –

if you wish to see the beauty of Hathor in her sacred bark  
etc.

The stela stood "in the temple" and "at the terrace"; that means one of two things : either "temple" and "terrace" are synonyms used in parallelism, or the "terrace" was a particular part of the temple. The latter seems more likely, especially in the light of the Ramesside word *ryd* : Wb. II, 401 : "Terrasse mit Säulenhalle vor dem inneren Tempel".

**4.3 Personal Piety.** Although Breasted introduced the phrase "An age of personal piety", when he wrote : "An age of personal piety and inner aspiration now dawned among the masses" (Development [1912] p. 349), it was Erman who had coined "persönliche Frömmigkeit" in his *Denksteine aus der thebanischen Gräberstadt* (1911). And it was Erman who first traced this "innere Religiosität" back to the Amarna age. This aspect, however, was overshadowed by the success of Breasted's "age of personal piety" as a characterisation of the Ramesside age. Both terms became catchwords, hence oversimplifications (as was noted by Fecht in his *Literarische Zeugnisse*, p. 11), and stimulated a large number of studies, which are now surveyed in Brunner's article "Persönliche Frömmigkeit" in *LÄ IV*, 951ff.

I merely wish to stress that what the New Kingdom brought to full fruition — the sense of personal relation to, and dependence on, the deity — had been harbored by the individual Egyptian long before the New Kingdom and was articulated — tersely — in the First Intermediate period, when men of the rising middle class attributed their successes to the aid of their town-god (see p.30, n. 3). As for the worship of Osiris on Abydene monuments of the Middle Kingdom, it can hardly be called anything other than "personal piety". Naturally, this particular piety was partial, since it was directed exclusively toward securing the protection of the god-of-the-dead for the individual's life-after-death. But given the evidence of the First Intermediate period, it stands to reason that the death-oriented Osirian piety was the fruit of an evolving personal piety which, soon after the peak of Osirian worship, found new and more comprehensive expression in the hymns and prayers of the New Kingdom. Nor does our assembly of Abydene worshippers lack a range of personal tones in their urgent supplications.

Yet even at its peak in the Middle Kingdom, Osirian piety did not result in massive nationwide pilgrimages-of-the-living to Abydos (so also Yoyotte, *Pèlerinages*, 37ff). Several thousand stelae erected at Abydos in the course of three centuries do not add up to a mass movement. Furthermore, just as the 11th dynasty treasurer Meru (No. 25) had worshipped the Abydene Osiris and Wepwawet from within his Theban tomb, so the wealthy tomb owners of 12th dynasty Egypt in various locations performed magical voyages to Abydos — pictorially fixed in their tombs — in the context of their local cemeteries.

## VI. THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AMENEMHET AND REMARKS ON STYLE

### 1. No. 60 : THE NOMARCH AMENEMHET

Leaving the cemeteries of Abydos and travelling north to the Oryx nome for a visit to the "Great Headman" Amenemhet is to reenter the land of the living, even though we call on him in his rock tomb, at Beni Hasan. There, the handsomely painted tombs of the nome chiefs held fast what Abydene memorials could not : the joys of life lived in action and in splendor.

Tomb No. 2, of the nomarch Amenemhet, shows not only the scenes traditional since the Old Kingdom — labors of farm and work shop, the homelife of the master and his wife, the master's favorite pastime of hunting in marshes and deserts — but also the siege of a fortified town, and those very curious sequences of men in wrestling matches. Furthermore, there is the scene that pays homage to the Osirian faith, and has recently entered the repertoire : the river journey to and from Abydos and Busiris by the deceased and mummified tomb owner. Altogether, the scenes furnish a rich background to Amenemhet's narrative autobiography.

In addition to its factual-historical value, the distinction of the autobiography lies in its skilful phrasing, its balanced shapeliness, and its even and pleasant tone. They are the qualities of harmony that characterize the best literary and pictorial works of the age, and made the language and art of the early 12th dynasty "classic" and paradigmatic.

### 60. Tomb Inscriptions of the Nomarch Amenemhet

Beni Hasan Tomb No. 2 (UE 16)  
Reign of Sesostri I

Newberry, Beni Hasan I, pp. 11-38, pls. vii-xxi; Urk. VII, 13-25.

Of this richly inscribed and decorated tomb the following texts are translated here : 1. The initial self-presentation, inscribed on the architrave and door-posts of the portico (A, B, C on Newberry's key-plan, p. 19). 2.

The autobiography, on the door-jambs leading to the main chamber (D, E on Newberry's key-plan, p. 19). 3. The legends above the ships voyaging to Abydos and Busiris, on the east wall of the main chamber (I, J, K on Newberry's key-plan, p. 19).

## 1. Initial Self-Presentation

Newberry, pl. vii; Urk. VII, 16-18

### *A. Architrave, 5 lines*

(1) The living Horus *Ankh-mesut*, the Two Ladies, *Ankh-mesut*, Gold-Horus *Ankh-mesut*, King of Upper and Lower Egypt *Kheperkare*, Son of Re *Senwosret*; the good god, lord of diadems, lord of ceremonial, given life-stability-dominion-and-joy like Re forever.

(2) The Honored one before Khnum, lord of Herwer, the Prince, Count, Gracious one,<sup>1</sup> Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, the Great Headman of the Oryx nome, the Phyle Controller in the temple, Ameny, justified.

(3) The Honored one before Horus, smiter of people, the Prince Count, Gracious one, Overseer of all things sky-given and earth-grown, Overseer of horn, hoof, feather, and scale, the true King's Friend, Amenemhet, justified.

(4) The Honored one before Horus, foremost of Hebenu, the Prince, Count, King's Own Favorite, Overseer of the inventories of divine offerings, Ameny, justified.<sup>2</sup>

(5) The honored one before Khnum, lord of Irod,<sup>3</sup> the Prince, Count, Gracious one, a noble of long standing in the house of ...<sup>4</sup> the Overseer of the pleasure ponds, Amenemhet, justified.

### *B. Right Door Post*

#### *4 cols. & 1 line*

(1) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Anubis upon his mountain, *imy-wt*, lord of the sacred land : a good burial in the western desert, in his tomb of the necropolis, for the *ka* of

(2) the Prince, Count, Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, Gracious one, the Great Headman of the Oryx nome, one kind-hearted to all people,<sup>5</sup> who calms fear, gives welcome to all,

conducts rowers and sailors.<sup>6</sup>

(3) The Prince, Count, Chief Priest,  
merciful to one at fault,  
free of plotting evil,  
there is no greed in his body,  
what he speaks is truth.

(4) The Prince, Count, sole great hunter,<sup>7</sup>  
King's Favorite who controls the supply depots,  
Priest of Shu and Tefnut,  
the true King's Friend in the South,  
(5) the honored Amenemhet.

*C. Left Door Post*

*4 cols. & 1 line*

(1) An offering-that-the-king-gives (to) Osiris, lord of Busiris, great god, lord of Abydos, that he may give a voice-offering of bread, beer, beef, fowl, alabaster, clothing, and food-offerings to the *ka* of

(2) the Prince, Count, Royal Seal-bearer,  
Sole Companion, Gracious one,  
the Great Headman of the Oryx nome,  
Councillor (*imy-is*), Keeper of Nekhen, Chief of Nekheb,  
Priest of Horus-of-the-two-scorpions,  
Companion in the temple of the Red Crown, *spr*.<sup>8</sup>

(3) The Prince and Count,  
Controller of the Two Thrones on the platform of the Shrine,<sup>9</sup>  
King's Nobleman in .....<sup>10</sup>  
great-natured (*'3 n qdwy*) Noble on the day fear is given,  
who gives the King's fear <to> the Nine Bows,  
a Controller of hearts.

(4) The Prince, Count, Adorer of Horus-in-the-sky,  
Overseer of temples, keen-sighted, giver of voice to script,  
Chief Lector-priest, *Sem*-priest, Master of every apron,  
an open-handed one,<sup>11</sup>  
(5) the honored Amenemhet, justified, born of Henu.

## 2. Autobiography

Newberry, pl. viii; Urk. VII, 14-16

*Door-Jambs, 5 lines & 16 cols.*

(1) Year 43 under the majesty of Horus *Ankh-mesut*, King of Upper and Lower Egypt *Kheperkare*, ever living;

(2) the Two Ladies *Ankh-mesut*, Gold-Horus *Ankh-mesut*, Son of Re

*Senwosret*, living forever and ever;

(3) equal to year 25 in the Oryx nome of the Prince, Count, Gracious one, Ameny, justified.<sup>12</sup>

(4) Year 43, second month of the inundation season, day 15,<sup>13</sup>

O lovers of life, haters of (5) death,

say : 1000 of bread and beer,

1000 of beef and fowl,

(6) for the *ka* of the Prince, Count, Gracious one,

Great Headman<sup>14</sup> of the Oryx nome,

Councillor, Keeper of Nekhen, Chief of Nekheb,

Overseer of priests, Ameny, justified.

#### *First Expedition*

I followed my lord when he sailed (7) south to overthrow his enemies among the foreign peoples. As a Count's son, Royal Sealbearer, and Chief Troop Commander of (8) the Oryx nome did I sail, as a man replaces his aged father through the favor of the king's house and his being beloved in the palace.<sup>15</sup>

I by-passed (9) Kush in sailing south,

I reached the ends of earth;

I brought back gifts (*inw*) of all kinds,

and praise of me reached the sky.<sup>16</sup>

Then (10) his majesty proceeded in safety, having overthrown his enemies in wretched Kush. I returned in his following in alertness (11) and no loss occurred in my troops.

#### *Second Expedition*

I sailed south to fetch gold ore to the majesty of King *Kheperkare*, living forever and ever. (12) I sailed south with the Prince, Count, Eldest King's Son of his body, Ameny, life-prosperity-health.<sup>17</sup> I sailed south with 400 conscripts<sup>18</sup>, the choicest of my troops, and returned in safety without loss to them. I brought the gold I had demanded, was rewarded for it in the king's house, (14) and the king's son thanked me.

#### *Third Expedition*

Then I sailed south to fetch gold ore, to the town of Coptos, with the Prince, Count, Governor of the City and Vizier, *Senwosret*, life-prosperity-health<sup>19</sup>. I sailed south with 600 conscripts, (15) the bravest of the Oryx nome. I returned in peace, my soldiers safe, and I had done all I had been ordered.

#### *Ameny's Governance*

I am a man of grace<sup>20</sup>, ever loved, a ruler beloved of his town. I spent the years (16) as ruler of the Oryx nome with all dues for the king's house

being in my charge. I gave gang-overseers to the domains of the herdsmen of the Oryx nome and 3000 oxen as their yoke-oxen. I was praised (17) for it in the king's house in every year of the cattle tax<sup>21</sup>. I delivered all their dues to the king's house, and there was no shortage against me in any bureau of his, for the entire Oryx nome labored for me (18) in steady stride.

There was no citizen's daughter whom I shamed,  
no widow whom I oppressed,  
no farmer whom I drove away,  
no herdsman whom I turned back.

(19) There was no overseer of laborers<sup>22</sup> whose people I seized for labor.

There was no pauper in my surroundings,  
no hungry man in my time.

There came years of hunger. (20) Then I plowed all the fields of the Oryx nome to its southern and northern border, so that I fed its inhabitants<sup>23</sup>, provided its supplies, and none hungered in it. I gave alike to widow and married (21) woman, and I did not prefer the great to the small in all that I gave.

Then came high Niles, rich in barley and emmer, rich in all things, and I did not exact the arrears of the field.

### 3. Voyages to Abydos and Busiris

Newberry, pls. xiv & xvi; Urk. VII, 23

#### *Main Chamber, East Wall*

Faring upstream to fetch the requirements of Abydos for the Prince, Count, Gracious one, Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, Great Headman of the Oryx nome, true King's Friend, Amenemhet, justified and honored.

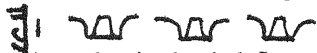
Faring downstream to fetch the requirements of Busiris for the Prince, Count, Gracious one, Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, Chief Priest of Khnum, lord of Herwer, for the *ka* of the honored Amenemhet, justified<sup>24</sup>.

#### Notes

1) The title *im3-'* (or, *i3m-'*) - "gracious of hand", is so prominently used in the tomb inscriptions of Amenemhet as to constitute the nomarch's principal appellation, the title-and-epithet by which he wished to be known. His choice of this particular title also throws some light on the Old Kingdom occurrences of *im3-'* (for which see Helck, Beamtentitel, 118) namely, that it was a specifically courtly title which originated in an epithet denoting the quality of graciousness or benignity. The suggestion to read *b3q-'* rather than *im3-'* is to be rejected, for in Amenemhet's usage *im3-'* is also paired with epithets of similar sound and meaning : *imy-ib*, *ims-ib*, and *nb-im3t*. See the further discussion in note



20. — 2) The title sequences in lines 2-5 were composed with care so as to form symmetrical patterns. Each line begins with Ameny's honored state before the principal gods of the nome, Horus and Khnum, the gods being named in an a-b-b-a pattern : Khnum - Horus - Horus - Khnum. Next come the principal court titles, *rp't*, *ḥ3ty-*, followed by *im3-*, except in line 4 where it is replaced by *imy-ib ity*. — 3) On the towns of Herwer, Hebenu, and Irod see Gardiner, AEO II, pp. 84\*-92\*. — 4) *S'h '3 n rnpt m pr imwt*; the meaning of *pr imwt* escapes me. — 5) With *ims-ib n rmt nb* begins the outline of Ameny's moral profile. — 6) Compare the statement of the Manager Seneni (Source No. 12) who declared he was helpful to travellers. — 7) More literally, "Sole great one at fish-and-fowl catch". — 8) On this obscure title see Wb. IV, 101. — 9) Reading *ḥrp nsty ḥr m3' (pr)-nsr*, with Vandersleyen, CdE 43 (1968) 251. — 10) After *špsy nswt m* there is the sign of the harpoon-head (T. 19) and a thrice written sign that looks somewhat like a boat and may be the same sign that occurs three times in the hunting-in-the-marshes scenes of Khnumhotep

II (Urk. VII, 37) :  The reading of this group seems to be unknown. As a shot in the dark I propose that Ameny here calls himself "King's companion at the spear-hunt in the marshes". — 11) *Wr-drt* is probably synonymous with *3w-drt*, used twice in No. 47. — 12) A remarkable instance of eponymous dating by the nomarch, added to the regnal date. As Gardiner put it, "Evidently a balance had been established between royal power and princely pride" (Egypt of the Pharaohs, 129). — 13) The precise date may, but need not be, the date of Ameny's death or burial. Tombs were usually prepared during their owners' lives, and the autobiography was not a deathbed product. But the five horizontal lines with their dating could have been added to the main body of the autobiographical narration at the time of the nomarch's burial. — 14. The hieroglyph compounded of sun-disk and horns is not found in Gardiner's sign-list, and I had failed to recognize it as a playful writing of *ḥry-tp*, until E. Staehelin, whom I asked, guessed it. Once recognized it can be found in Wb. III, 140, and Ward, Index, nos. 1046 etc. — 15. Just as Amenemhet's eponymous dating was balanced by the regnal date, so here his claim to hereditary office is blended with his recognition of the king's authority in making appointments. — 16) The quatrain is an excellent example of what I take to be rhythmic Kunstprosa of the narrative kind. — 17) The future king Amenemhet II. — 18) The *ḥsbw* are thought to be "conscripts"; see Simpson, Papyrus Reisner I; Helck, Wirtschafts- geschichte, 148, and "Frondienst" in LÄ II, 333f. — 19) The future king Sesostri II. — 20) *Ink nb im3t*; here the quality of "graciousness/kindliness" is stated emphatically, and shows that the nomarch wore the old court title *im3-* as a badge of moral worth. The terms were not uniquely his, other nomarchs used them, sparingly - exx. Urk. VII, 28, 30, 43, 54 - but for Amenemhet his benignity was his hall-mark. The literary treatment of the quality of benignity may have been especially popular at this time : on the stela of Mentuhotep son of Hapu (University College, London, No. 14333) there occurs the sentence *drt pw i3mt mrwt*, "the kindly hand is what is loved", in which Goedicke plausibly surmised "a well known saying" (JEA 48, 1962, 33, note af). The sentence has the form of a "saying", and the text as a whole is one long discourse on kindness. — 21. Basically, I follow Gardiner's rendering of the passage in Egypt of the Pharaohs, 129. — 22) The term *ḏrwt* is not in the Wörterbuch, *mr ḏrwt* is not in Ward, Index, and I do not know a discussion of it. — 23) On *ḥrw* see now Franke, Verwandtschaft, 231-235. — 24) The boat

Abydos and Busiris by the *corpse* of the tomb owner, often depicted in tombs since the Middle Kingdom, is yet another manifestation of Osirian worship as it now flourished. The "pilgrimage" of the dead served the same purpose as that of the living.

## A NOTE ON *INW*

Both Henu and Amenemhet (Nos. 21 & 60) spoke of the *inw* they had brought back from the lands south of Egypt's border. Tjetji (No. 19) referred to the *inw* given to the king by all of Egypt "through fear of him throughout this land". The nomarch Khety I of Siut (No. 8) told of the *inw* he had given his town in the shape of an irrigation system. The meanings of *inw* were debated with some heat in recent issues of GM, with one side denying that *inw* ever meant "tribute" and the other side defending the meaning "tribute". More light is obtained from Spalinger's discussion of *inw* in his study of foods in P. Bulaq 18 (SAK 13, 1986, 179-241) where he analyzed the *inw* accounts and the '*qw*' accounts, and suggested that the regular input was called '*qw*', while *inw* meant special or additional deliveries, which might be called "imposts".

A bright new light is shed on *inw* by Clère's study of the autobiography of a Saite general (BIFAO 84, 1984, 85-100) who brought *innw* to the town in the shape of waterworks, and described his deed in terms recalling those used by Khety I of Siut. Clère thinks it is a deliberate imitation of the Siut text. What is most interesting is his finding that *innw* here does not mean "gifts" but means "additions" ("additions, améliorations, ajouts"). In support he cites a passage from an inscription of Sarenput I in the Heqaib sanctuary on Elephantine island, where Sarenput recorded his rebuilding of the shrine of Heqaib and said: *in(.i) in(w) hr w3t.s nbt m ḥ3 r snṯt tpt*, which Clère renders as: "j'ai apporté un apport sur chacun de ses côtés en addition au plan primitif". The whole inscription can now be found in Habachi, The Sanctuary of Heqaib, pp. 28-29 & pl. 13. Here, the meaning "additions/improvements" is very clear. It is a meaning that should be added to the Wörterbuch definitions of *inw*, all of which, including "Tributabgaben", have stood up very well. That is to say, the basic range of *inw* is, in German, covered neatly by "Gabe - Abgabe - Zugabe". "Tribut" comes under the heading "Abgabe"; and let it be remembered that "tribute" is not only something paid in token of submission, but also something given or spoken as a sign of respect, without the connotation that the giver is of inferior status.

Now while the meaning "addition" is a valuable contribution to our understanding of the lexical range of *inw*, for the passage in the inscription of Khety I of Siut I still prefer the rendering, "I gave a gift to this town", even if the Saite general said, "I made additions to his (the god's) town."

## 2. REMARKS ON STYLE

To read the sixty autobiographies assembled here is to watch the growth of self-understanding, expressed in an expanding moral vocabulary. The career of the architect Nekhebu (No. 2) is paradigmatic for the values of the Old Kingdom royal official. Excellent performance of tasks brought royal rewards. His personal life had been enhanced by service to his elder brother, his family life was governed by affection for his kin, his social life by the benevolence which the age he lived in had formulated as : feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and neither doing evil nor speaking it.

Near the end of the Old Kingdom, the career of Pepiankh the Middle (No. 5) throws light on a magistrate in a provincial environment, away from the royal residence. Though displaying a string of court titles, Pepiankh is a provincial administrator and chief priest of the local temple. What he narrates is a summation of the daily life of an honest magistrate, and "honor" is his key concept. That is to say, the term *im3h* is not used in the original concrete meaning of being "looked after" ("versorgt") by the king or the god, but in the newer sense of being "esteemed" by gods and men. His usage of the term makes this clear : he tells that he was "honored" alike by the king, the god, and the people.

The slow disintegration of the Old Kingdom<sup>(1)</sup> was followed by a brief kingless period which liberated the individual. All sections of the population, the rich, the poor, and the rising middle class, now erected tombs and memorial stones with self-presentations designed to secure a share in immortality (Nos. 6-14). The nomarchs, territorial lords, inform posterity of the energetic and beneficial governance of their nomes and the resulting peace and prosperity (Nos. 6-8). Town rulers and lesser office-holders dwell on a similar devotion to the public good, along with their (honest) acquisition of private property (Nos. 9-14). The new attitudes of self-reliance and self-reflection are mirrored in the growing vocabulary. Man has discovered his "self" and has begun to formulate its manifestations. The word *qd* ("form"), available since the Old Kingdom in the meanings of "character", "behavior" and "good repute", becomes prominent and continues in all three senses, until it loses some ground to *bi3t*, which is more specifically "character".

When, with the 11th dynasty, a vigorous kingship returned, the royal servant was once again the leading social type. But the gain in self-awareness during the kingless time had been so large that bending to royal authority was now coupled with a pride of self that expressed itself in a manner quite

(1) The recognition that the disintegration of the Old Kingdom was a slow process has at last gained the upper hand and is now embodied in the thoughtful dissertation of Müller-Wollermann, *Krisenfaktoren im ägyptischen Staat*.

beyond the scope of the Old Kingdom. Around the notion of "character", the writers of autobiographies now spun ever larger webs of characterizations by which to portray individual persons, portrayals in which the particular and the typical were inextricably blended (Nos. 15-21).

The time of the 11th dynasty was especially inventive of new terms and ever more elaborate verbal self-portraits. The 12th dynasty added refining nuances and stressed balance and symmetry. (The new impulses of New Kingdom autobiographies are excluded from the scope of this study).

In the development of Egyptian autobiography, the autobiographies of Abydene stelae occupy a special place, which we have examined at length. Designed to ensure access to an eternal life under the protection of Osiris, the Abydene autobiography furthered moral self-portrayals and reduced the scope of career narration. The latter was crowded out even more as the ritual texts — offering formula, Abydos formula, consecration and adoration texts — expanded. And before the creative impulses that governed the proliferation of Abydene stelae subsided, the hope of an Osirian hereafter produced some fervent hymns to Osiris, and to his holy city, in the context of the autobiographical stelae (Nos. 38, 47, 57-59).

On the three stelae of Intef son of Sent (Nos. 45-47) the moral self-portrait attained the peak of artful composition, especially in No. 47, where the twenty long sentences each beginning with *ink*, and aligned in symmetrical vertical columns, assemble a catalogue of virtues into a portrait of the perfect civil servant. If one sums the long periods up briefly, Intef is there described as :

silent, polite, cool, pleasant,  
controlled, friendly, well-meaning,  
generous, helpful, straight and true,  
open-handed, kindly, calm, and wise,  
firm-footed, excellent of counsel, faithful,  
and not hasty, short-tempered, aggressive, or stingy.

The Egyptian words are :

*gr, šbn, qb, 'nw,*  
*s3qw, sfnw, bnr-m3t,*  
*ḥd-ḥr, ir 3 ḥt, mty, m3',*  
*3w-drt, nfr, w3ḥ-ib, rh,*  
*mn-rd, iqr-šḥr, mdd-mtn,*  
*ḥ3ḥ, sin-ḥr, ndr-w, ḥbs-ḥr*

Culling these terms from Intef's long periods is designed to show a chunk of the typical moral vocabulary available now, in the early 12th dynasty. It is of course fortunate that Intef or his scribe had stopped after those twenty well-tailored sentences. Anything more would have turned eloquence into loquacity.

Evidently there was a connection between an official's rank and the

length of his self-praise. And surely no one but an official of the highest rank could have cast his self-laudation in the form of a royal speech, as the treasurer Ikhnofret did. Lesser persons were content to be brief, and it happened that some of the brief self-presentations turned out fresh and original. Such are the self-presentations of the priest Mentuhotep (No. 27), the envoy Ded-Iqu (No. 39), and the pilgrim Ankhu (No. 43).

Mentuhotep introduced himself as an early-orphaned self-made man, whose inborn good nature had replaced the teaching and example of parents. In Ded-Iqu's self-presentation, the account of his mission, and of his qualifications for it, are effectively interrelated. The citizen Ankhu, on a private visit to the Osiris temple, tells posterity that he was a born winner who knew how to make the best of every situation. In all three cases the speeches are phrased, no less than those of Intef son of Sent, in a formal style which I have previously called "orational" and which I now also call "prose-poetry" or "Kunstprosa".

The difficult problem of Egyptian prosody (or metrics) is not considered in this study. I speak of styles, not of prosody. My views on the styles of Egyptian literary texts — and autobiographies on stone are, to my mind, literary texts — are basically those that I expressed in my *Ancient Egyptian Literature*.

It seems to me true to say what many writers have said, that prose and poetry are the two extremities of one continuum. Even in a living language it is not always easy to distinguish the different parts of the continuum. Writers enjoy shifting gears and mixing styles. Read aloud this beginning of a modern autobiography :

*"The June grass, amongst which I stood, was taller than I was, and I wept. I had never been so close to grass before. It towered above me and all around me, each blade tattooed with tiger-skins of sunlight. ... For the first time in my life I was out of the sight of humans. For the first time in my life I was alone in a world whose behaviour I could neither predict nor fathom : a world of birds that squealed, of plants that stank, of insects that sprang about without warning. I was lost and did not expect to be found again. I put back my head and howled, and the sun hit me smartly in the face, like a bully."*<sup>(1)</sup>

Prose, or prose-poetry ? And what about that tristich form so familiar from Egyptian texts :

"a world of birds that squealed,  
of plants that stank,  
of insects that sprang about without warning."

The basic parts of the autobiography had been worked out in the Old Kingdom : the career narration; the moral profile; and the prayerful speeches — the offering formula, the appeal to the living, and the warning to visitors. And from the start, all parts other than the career narration were composed in what I call the orational style, or more briefly, *Kunstprosa*, while the career

(1) Laurie Lee, *Cider with Rosie*. London 1959, p. 9.

narration is told in ordinary prose. In the texts of the Middle Kingdom the scope of the two basic forms is enlarged and refined. The principal differences between the two styles are these : In narrative prose verbal sentences play the leading part, and sentences differ in structure, in types of subordinating clauses, and in length. As a result, the rhythms of the sentences vary and thus do not add up to a regular pattern. The orational style grew into several branches. In one branch, nominal sentences construed with nouns, participles, and relative forms, predominate. This form is favored in the self-laudatory parts of the autobiographies. The nominal sentences are hospitable to repetitive parallel constructions ("parallelismus membrorum") and the repetitions create a regularized sentence rhythm. But parallelism is an instinct rather than a principle, and one that encourages variations and modulations. Hence its sentence rhythms are not completely regular; the sentences do not march to a single rhythmic beat.

The inscription of Henu (No. 21) is an excellent example of the two basic styles in a clear sequence : oratio followed by narratio. Lines 4-9 contain the laudation of the high official; in line 10 begins his narration of the expedition. The contrast between the nominal forms of the one and the verbal forms of the other is unmistakable; and so is the contrast in sentence rhythm.

Although the self-laudations favored the nominal style of oratio, they nevertheless developed an additional, more complex, form of oration in which verbal and nominal sentences were combined. To this type belong the three brief self-presentations of Mentuhotep, Ded-Iqu, and Ankhu (Nos. 27, 39, 43, and see p. 144). Moreover, the chamberlain Semti the Younger (No. 41) related the beginning of his career in a sequence of purely verbal sentences (lines 4-6) which one would classify as a prose narration were it not for the fact that the sentences consist of bi-partite periods of matching type and length, which set up a regular rhythm.

Still other forms of the orational style are employed in the prayerful parts of the autobiography. In the warnings to visitors, and in the appeals for offerings addressed to visitors, the sentences consist of threats, wishes, and promises, phrased in future tenses, imperatives, and conditional clauses. Then there is the Abydos Formula with its sequences of afterlife wishes ("May he sail"...). Lastly, there are the solemn consecration texts ("I have now made this memorial" ...).

Not discussed here is the most prominent type of orational style, the one in which the Instructions ("Lebenslehren") are composed, since Instructions appear only rarely in the context of autobiography.

In the autobiographical inscriptions, it was the formal self-presentation that gave the most scope to the orational style, especially in the form of sequences of nominal sentences. The sequences could consist of long sentences with dependent clauses, such as those of Henu (No. 21) or Intef son of Sent (No. 47). The latter is especially instructive, for there the stichic writing in lined columns suggests that the long sentences were meant to be

read as single sentences, and not as clusters of distichs, tristichs, and tetrastichs. The latter form — shorter sentences matched by parallel members and thereby creating distichs etc. — is found, for example in the self-praise of Wepwawet-aa (No. 31) lines 8-10. The two kinds are, however, very similar, and I can not always tell them apart. Wherever the orational style in any of its forms seemed to me clearly present, I have indicated its presence by indentation, by nuances of punctuation, and by paragraphing.

The Abydene autobiographical stelae here studied also included praises of the holy ground of Abydos and hymns to Osiris (Nos. 38, 47, 57-59). By their devices, these laudations belong in the family of orational style forms. But additional elements are present, notably an increase in parallelism by which a tighter form is achieved, and anaphoric beginnings which create strophic divisions. Add to this a more circumscribed content and a heightened intensity, and we have come to that part of the continuum which bears the name of poetry.

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Over the next two thousand years ancient Egyptian autobiographies continued to build their bulwarks against oblivion — and they succeeded remarkably well.

Was in der Zeiten Bildersaal  
Jemals ist trefflich gewesen,  
Das wird immer einer einmal  
Wieder auffrischen und lesen.  
(Goethe)

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- 1     *Stela of Rediu-Khnum (No. 18) CG 20543: Pl. I*
- 2     *Stela of Tjetji (No. 19) BM 614: Pl. II*
- 3     *Stela of Meru (No. 25) Turin 1447: Pl. III*
- 4     *Stela of Mentuhotep (No. 27) Cambridge E 9.1922: Pl. IV*
- 5-14   *Views of Abydos, photographed by Stefan Wimmer :*
- 5     *Tempel of Seti I: Pl. V*
- 6     *Tempel of Ramses II and Coptic Village Deir Sitt Damyana: Pl. V*
- 7     *Middle Kingdom Temple Area, looking East: Pl. VI*
- 8     *Middle Kingdom Temple Area, looking South: Pl. VI*
- 9     *Middle Kingdom Temple Area, looking West toward Enclosure Wall: Pl. VII*
- 10    *Western Enclosure Wall, from inside Temple Area: Pl. VII*
- 11    *Shunet ez-Zebib, looking South-west: Pl. VIII*
- 12    *Double Wall of Shunet ez-Zebib: Pl. VIII*
- 13    *Looking into the Wadi from Rim of North Cemetery: Pl. IX*
- 14    *In the Wadi, looking West toward Umm el-Qaab: Pl. IX*

*Plan of Abydos, from PM V, 38: Pl. X*



## SYMBOLS

Half brackets ‘ ’ are used instead of question marks to signify doubtful translations.

Square brackets [ ] enclose restorations.

Angle brackets < > enclose words omitted by the scribe.

Parentheses ( ) enclose additions in the English translations.

A row of three dots indicates the omission in the English translation of one or two Egyptian words. A row of six dots indicates a longer omission.

A row of three dashes indicates a short lacuna in the text. A row of six dashes indicates a lengthy lacuna.

## ABBREVIATIONS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

### I. COLLECTIONS, JOURNALS, SERIES, ETC.

ÄA	Ägyptologische Abhandlungen
ÄAT	Ägypten und Altes Testament
ÄF	Ägyptologische Forschungen
ANET	Ancient Near Eastern Texts relating to the Old Testament, ed. J.B. Pritchard. Princeton 1955
ANOC	Abydos North Offering Chapel (from Simpson, The Terrace of the Great God)
ASAE	Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Egypte
Aegypt.Inschr.	Ägyptische Inschriften aus den königlichen Museen zu Berlin. 2v. Leipzig 1913-1924
ArchOr	Archiv Orientalni
BIFAO	Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale
BM	British Museum
Berlin Fs	Festschrift zum 150jährigen Bestehen des Berliner Ägyptischen Museums. (Mitteilungen aus der ägyptischen Sammlung, 8) Berlin 1974
BiOr	Bibliotheca Orientalis
Bonnet, RÄRG	H. Bonnet, Reallexikon der ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte. Berlin 1952
CAH	The Cambridge Ancient History. 3d edition
CG	Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire
Capart Fs	Volume offert à Jean Capart. (Université libre de Bruxelles, Annuaire de l'Institut de Philologie et d'Histoire Orientale et Slave, 3) Bruxelles 1935
CdE	Chronique d'Egypte
DAI	Deutsches Archäologisches Institut

Dunham Fs	Studies in Ancient Egypt, the Aegean and the Sudan. Essays in Honor of Dows Dunham ... ed. W.K. Simpson & W.M. Davis. Boston 1981
Eg. Oudheid	Rijksmuseum van Oudheden te Leiden. De Egyptische Oudheid (by) H.D. Schneider & M.J. Raven. 's-Gravenhage 1981
Fecht Fs	Form und Mass; Festschrift für Gerhard Fecht, ed. J. Osing & G. Dreyer (ÄAT, 12) Wiesbaden 1987
GM	Göttinger Miszellen
GOF	Göttinger Orientforschungen
HÄB	Hildesheimer ägyptologische Beiträge
HT	Hieroglyphic Texts from Egyptian Stelae etc. (in the) British Museum
IFAO	Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire
JARCE	Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt
JEA	Journal of Egyptian Archaeology
JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
LÄ	Lexikon der Ägyptologie
MDIK	Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo
Mélanges Maspero I	Orient Ancien. (IFAO, Mémoires, 66) Cairo 1934-38
Mélanges Mokhtar	Mélanges Gamal Eddin Mokhtar. 2v. (IFAO, Bibliothèque d'Etude, 97) Cairo 1985
München Kat. 1972	Munich. Staatliche Sammlung ägyptischer Kunst. Munich 1972
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis
Or	Orientalia
PM	B. Porter & R.L.B. Moss, Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs and Paintings, 7v. Oxford 1927-52; 2d ed. 1960-

RdE	Revue d'Égyptologie
RT	Recueil de travaux relatifs à la philologie et à l'archéologie égyptiennes et assyriennes
SAK	Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur
SO	Sources Orientales
Schott Fs	Festschrift für Siegfried Schott zu seinem 70. Geburtstag, ed. W. Helck. Wiesbaden 1968
TAVO	Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients
TPPI	J.J. Clère & J. Vandier, Textes de la première période intermédiaire et de la XIe dynastie, I. (Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca, 10) Bruxelles 1948
UE	Upper Egypt (used with nome numbers)
Urk. I, IV, VII	Urkunden des ägyptischen Altertums : Abteilung I : Urkunden des Alten Reiches Abteilung IV : Urkunden der 18. Dynastie Abteilung VII : Urkunden des Mittleren Reiches, Heft I.
WZKM	Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes
Wb.	Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache, ed. A. Erman & H. Grapow. 7v. Leipzig 1926-1963
ZÄS	Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde

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## THE SOURCES BY NUMBER

<i>No.</i>	<i>Location</i>
1. Hetep-her-akhet	Leiden
2. Nekhebu	Cairo & Boston
3. Pepinakht-Heqaib	Aswan Tomb 35
4. Sabni	Aswan Tomb 35e
5. Pepiankh the Middle	Meir Tomb D 2
6. Henqu	Deir el-Gebrawi Tomb 67
7. Ankhtifi	Mo'alla Tomb
8. Khety I	Siut Tomb 5
9. Indi	Metropolitan Museum 25.2.3
10. Iti	Cairo 20001
11. Neferyu	Metropolitan Museum 12.183.8
12. Seneni	Edinburgh 1910.96
13. Hasi	Cairo 1649
14. Fegu	Strasbourg 344
15. Intef	Cairo 20009
16. Djari	Cairo JE 41437
17. Djari	Brussels E. 4985
18. Rediu-Khnum	Cairo 20543
19. Tjetji	British Museum 614
20. Intef son of Tjefi	Metropolitan Museum 57.95
21. Henu	Wadi Hammamat 114
22. Henenu	Moscow 4071
23. Qemnen	Turin 1517
24. Intef	Copenhagen 963
25. Meru	Turin 1447
26. Nakhty	Chatsworth
27. Mentuhotep	Cambridge E 9.1922
28. Rudjahau	Cairo 20514

29. Rudjahau	British Museum 159
30. Intef-iqer	Leiden V 3 = 3
31. Wepwawet-aa	Leiden V 4 = 5
32. Wepwawet-aa	Munich GL.WAF 35
33. Amenysonb	Louvre C 12
34. Amenysonb	Louvre C 11
35. Amenysonb	Liverpool E. 30
36. Mery	Louvre C 3
37. Mery	Louvre C 19
38. Shen-setji	Los Angeles
39. Ded-Iqu	Berlin 1199
40. Djaa	British Museum 573
41. Senti the Younger	British Museum 574
42. Ikhermofret	Berlin 1204
43. Sehetepibre & Ankhu	Liège
44. Mentuwosre	Metropolitan Museum 12.184
45. Intef son of Sent	British Museum 572
46. Intef son of Sent	British Museum 562
47. Intef son of Sent	British Museum 581
48. Intef	Leiden V 6 = 4
49. Amenemhet	British Museum 567
50. Amenemhet	Cairo 20040
51. Imeny	Louvre C 35
52. Imeny	British Museum 162
53. Imeny	Cairo 20546
54. Inher-nakht	British Museum 575
55. Inher-nakht	British Museum 559
56. Nebipusenwosret	British Museum 101
57. Sebeksen	British Museum 580
58. Wepwawet-hotep	British Museum 1367
59. Ibia	Cairo 20086
60. Amenemhet	Beni Hasan Tomb 2

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## EGYPTIAN WORDS (SELECTION)

### I. Characterisations

<i>3w-drt</i>	open-handed, generous	110, 140, 143
<i>im3-'</i>	gracious, benign	136-140
<i>imy-ib</i>	favorite	42, 46, 47, 49, 50, 53, 137, 139
<i>ims-ib</i>	kind-hearted	136, 139
<i>iqr-sḥr</i>	excellent of counsel	93, 98, 111, 143
<i>'3-r</i>	bigmouth	20
<i>'3-qd,</i> <i>'3-n-qdwy</i>	great-natured, steadfast	86, 88, 137
<i>'q-ib</i>	confidant	42, 49, 127
<i>'q3-bi3t</i>	straight-natured	29, 49
<i>w3ḥ-ib</i>	calm, patient	41, 111, 143
<i>wr-drt</i>	open-handed, generous	42, 137, 140
<i>wsh-ib</i>	wide-hearted, generous	112, 113
<i>bi3t</i>	character, nature, behavior	29, 69, 96, 97, 142
<i>bw-dwy</i>	wickedness	47, 49
<i>fnḥ-ib</i>	discerning	71, 72
<i>m3r-inm</i>	pleasant-mannered	42, 49
<i>mn-rd</i>	firm-footed	111, 143
<i>mnḥ-qd</i>	well-disposed	24, 49
<i>mhi-ib</i>	forgetful	43, 49
<i>mḥ-ib</i>	trusty	29, 36, 50, 53, 76, 127
<i>mdww</i>	speaker	110, 111
<i>mds-bi3t</i>	strength of character	104, 105
<i>mdd-mṯn</i>	faithful, fidelity	43, 86, 88, 111, 143
<i>nb-im3t</i>	man of grace, gracious	138-140
<i>nb-šfyṯ</i>	dignified	42, 44, 49, 50

<i>nfr-'bb</i>	(meaning unclear)	44, 112, 113
<i>rh-ht</i>	knower of things, competent	43, 47, 49, 71, 107
<i>rsw-tp</i>	vigilance	16, 49
<i>hbs-hr</i>	veiled-of-face, stingy	104, 110-113, 143
<i>hns-ib</i>	anxiety, meanness	111-113
<i>hd-hr</i>	bright-faced, generous	104, 110, 111, 143
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<i>swt qnd</i>	situations of strife	110, 111
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<i>spd-hr</i>	alertness	138
<i>snb-ib</i>	well-being i.e. distress	41, 42
<i>shr</i>	conduct, counsel	69, 93, 98, 111, 143
<i>st-'</i>	performance	42, 43, 47
<i>st-ib</i>	favor, favorite	42, 46, 49-52, 54, 64, 86, 96, 121
<i>st-hr</i>	care, control	47, 49, 53
<i>st-hrt-ib</i>	confidence	47, 49
<i>qn</i>	brave, effective, able, efficient	35, 36, 51, 73, 103, 104, 108, 109
<i>qd, qdw,</i> <i>qdwy</i>	character, behavior, reputation, person	19, 20, 29-31, 38, 42-45, 47, 69, 72, 137, 142
<i>d'r</i>	seek, seek favor	108, 109

## II. Miscellaneous

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<i>'b'</i>	stela	101, 103, 105, 108, 109, 123
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<i>w''w</i>	privacy	47, 49, 50, 52, 75
<i>w'rt</i>	ground	19, 20, 48, 62, 63, 67, 71-73, 84, 86-88, 90, 92, 95, 112, 113, 115, 118, 130-132
<i>m'h't</i>	tomb, cenotaph, memorial, monument	84, 85, 91-93, 95, 97- 99, 101, 102, 112, 113, 115, 121, 130, 131
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<i>mshtnt</i>	birthplace	68, 112, 113, 115, 131
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<i>rwd, rd</i>	stairway, terrace	44, 45, 68, 73, 91-94, 105, 114, 121, 130-134
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<i>sbi</i>	conduct; load	34, 53, 54
<i>sdrt</i>	vigil	79, 80, 86-88, 91, 95, 100, 115





## **PLATES**





1. Stela of Rediu-Khnum (No. 18) CG 20543



2. Stela of Tjetji (No. 19) BM 614



3. Stela of Meru (No. 25) Turin 1447



4. Stela of Mentuhotep (No. 27) Cambridge E 9.1922



5. Temple of Seti I



6. Temple of Ramses II and Coptic Village Deir Sitt Damyana



## PLATE VI



7. Middle Kingdom Temple Area, looking East



8. Middle Kingdom Temple Area, looking South



9. Middle Kingdom Temple Area,  
looking West toward Enclosure Wall

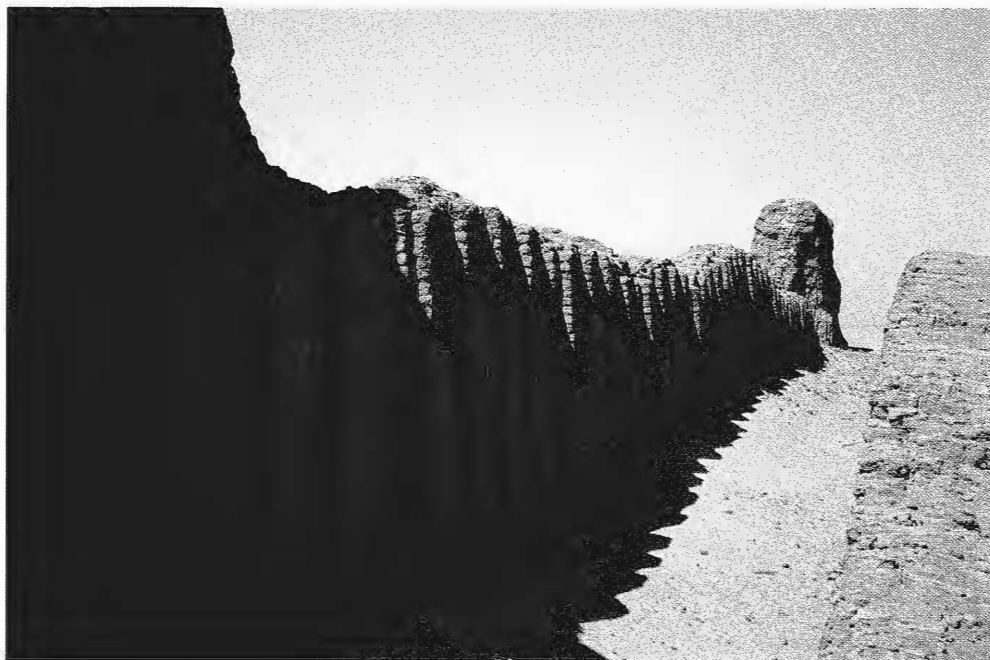


10. Western Enclosure Wall, from inside Temple Area

PLATE VIII



11. Shunet ez-Zebib, looking South-west



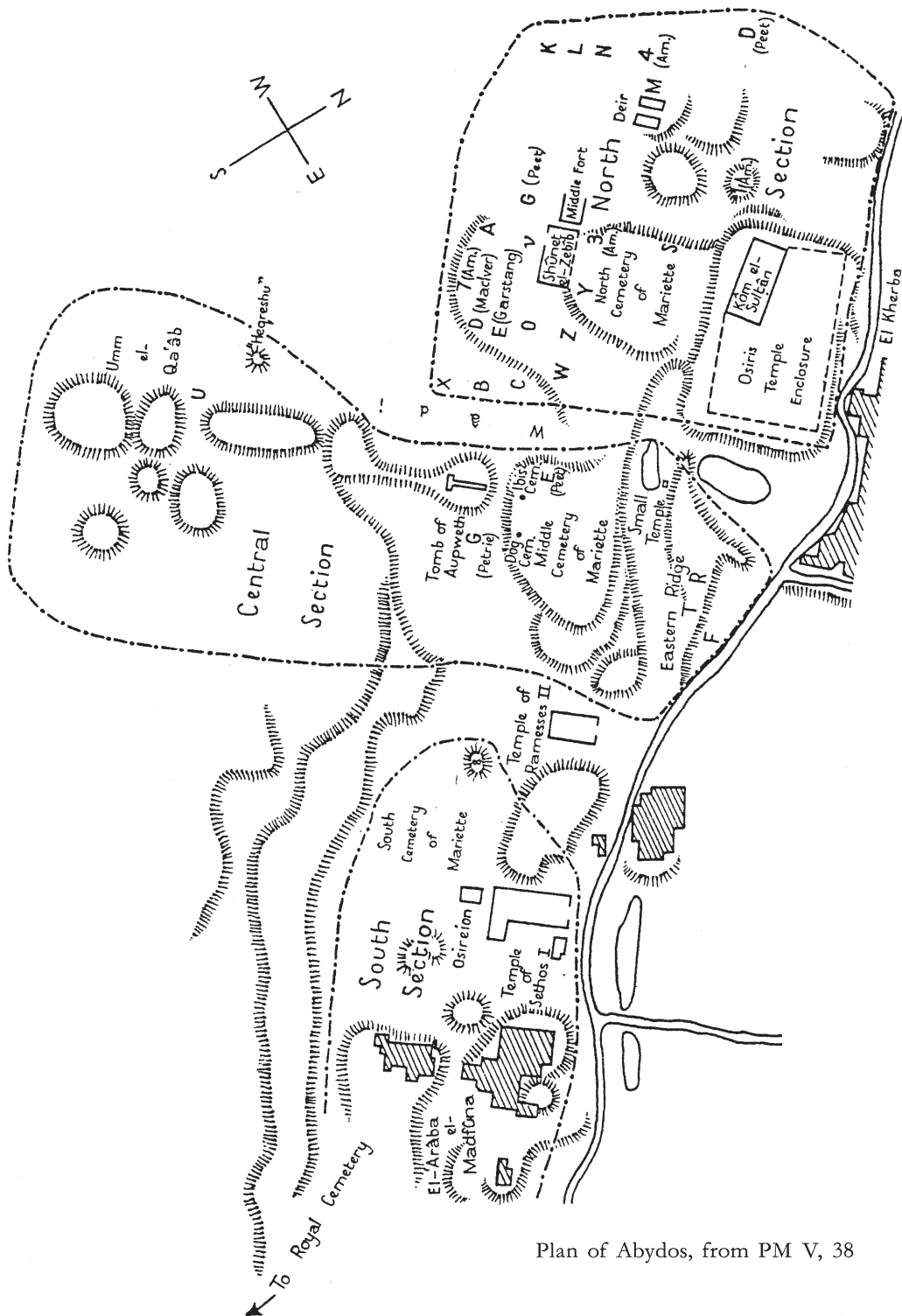
12. Double Wall of Shunet ez-Zebib



13. Looking into the Wadi from Rim of North Cemetery



14. In the Wadi, looking West toward Umm el-Qaab



Plan of Abydos, from PM V, 38



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By a selection of sixty ancient Egyptian autobiographical inscriptions, presented in new translations, the author examines the growth of the autobiographical genre during the Old and Middle Kingdoms, from ca. 2500 to ca. 1800 B.C. The Old Kingdom created the basic form: the autobiography as an integral part of the inscriptional and pictorial program of tombs – the planned and often sumptuous tombs of the well-to-do, who filled the major positions in the royal administration. After the decline of the Old Kingdom, the rising middle class diversified the genre, and loci other than tombs, notably free-standing stelae and rock faces of quarries, also became carriers of autobiographical self-presentations.

The cult of Osiris added yet another dimension: autobiographical stelae erected near the Osiris temple at Abydos and specifically designed to place their owners in the care of the god-of-the-dead. The texts of these stelae often describe their position as being «at the terrace of the great god», a description which has caused much scholarly rumination. Just what was the terrace of the great god? This study demonstrates that the texts themselves furnish the conclusive answer.

Finally, the reader meets a magnate of Middle Egypt in his splendid tomb, whose carefully stylized autobiography is a classic of Middle Kingdom oratory.